



To be bound with
Todd's
Metrical Psalms.

OBSERVATIONS

UPON THE

METRICAL VERSION OF THE PSALMS,

MADE BY

STERNHOLD, HOPKINS, AND OTHERS:

WITH A VIEW

TO ILLUSTRATE THE AUTHORITY WITH WHICH THIS COLLECTION WAS

AT FIRST ADMITTED, AND HOW THAT AUTHORITY HAS BEEN

SINCE REGARDED, IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

OF THE

Established Church of England;

AND THENCE TO MAINTAIN,

IN THIS VENERABLE SERVICE, THE USAGE OF SUCH METRICAL

PSALMODY ONLY AS IS DULY AUTHORIZED.

WITH

NOTICES OF OTHER ENGLISH METRICAL VERSIONS OF THE PSALMS.

BY THE

REV. HENRY JOHN TODD, M.A. F.S.A.

CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HIS MAJESTY,

AND RECTOR OF SETTRINGTON, COUNTY OF YORK.

Benè quidè præcipit Concilium Laodicenum in canone penult. ὅτι οὐ δεῖ ἰδιωτικοὺς ψαλμοὺς λέγεσθαι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, qui in Dei quidè honorem facti sint, publica verò auctoritate haud sanciti. Utinam antiquo hæc canoni hodierni fideles in nostra ecclesia Anglica auscultarent! Dr. ROUTH, *Reliq. Sac. Annot.* Ox. 1814, Vol. II. p. 503.

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1822.

OBSEVATIONS

ON THE

METRICAL VERSION OF THE PSALMS

BY

STERNHOLD, HOPKINS, AND OTHERS:

WITH

TO ILLUSTRATE THE AUTHORITY WITH WHICH THIS COLLECTION WAS

AT FIRST ADMITTED, AND HOW THAT AUTHORITY HAS BEEN

RECENT RECALLED, IN THE LATEST SERVICE

OF THE

Established Church of England;

AND THENCE TO MAINTAIN,

IN THIS GENERAL SERVICE, THE LEAD OF SUCH METRICAL

PRAYERS ONLY AS IS DULY AUTHORIZED.

WITH

NOTICES OF OTHER RECENT METRICAL VERSIONS OF THE PSALMS.

BY THE

REV. HENRY JOHN TODD, M.A. F.S.A.

CHURCHMAN IN GENERAL TO HIS NOBILITY

AND SECTION OF SOCIETY, CHURCH OF THE

Hand of God is powerful! Christian! Christian! In answer to prayer, for us and for
the world, God has sent us the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit has
sent us the Bible, and the Bible has sent us the Church, and the Church has
sent us the Gospel, and the Gospel has sent us the Kingdom of God on Earth.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR E. & J. RIVINGTON,

Printed by R. Gilbert, St. John's-square, London.

DEDICATION.

this zeal and these views, it is added, the thanks
of their Clergy, as well as of the Bishops, are
justly due. In this spirit, with the grateful
feelings also of devotion and obligation to your

TO HIS GRACE,

Grace, I accordingly felt obliged to offer my
public though humble thanks, in thus in-
scribing to your Grace, by the kindness of

CHARLES,

securing to your Grace, by the kindness of

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE,

LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND AND METROPOLITAN.

My Lord,

A learned Prelate, who maintains the usage
in our Churches only of authorized Psalms and
Hymns, has lately dedicated to your Grace a
Charge to the Clergy of his Diocese, to which
is subjoined his Lordship's powerful illustra-
tion of the usage in question. It is to your
Grace's just views of ecclesiastical govern-
ment, and unwearied zeal for the welfare of
the Church, that this tribute is paid; and to

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München

this zeal and these views, it is added, the thanks of their Clergy, as well as of the Bishops, are justly due. In this spirit, with the grateful feelings also of individual obligation to your Grace, I accordingly am enabled to offer my public though humble thanks, in thus inscribing to your Grace, by the kindness of your Grace's permission, the following considerations upon the same subject.

I have the honour to remain,

My Lord,

Your Grace's greatly obliged

and obedient Servant,

HENRY JOHN TODD.

June 21, 1822.

Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München

PREFACE.

“^a SOME perhaps may wonder,” Bishop Beveridge observes in his powerful Defence of the Metrical Version of the Psalms made by Sternhold, Hopkins, and others, “*why any one should trouble himself about so low and mean a subject, as this is generally thought to be*: BUT I THINK NOTHING MEAN, OR LOW, THAT HATH ANY RELATION TO THE SERVICE OF GOD AND HIS CHURCH.” Guided by this reasoning, I dutifully, however feebly, investigate, in the following pages, the same subject, as connected with the purity and uniformity of public worship in the United Church of England and Ireland.

Deviations from established custom, in regard to Metrical Psalmody, may certainly

^a Defence of the Old Metrical Version of the Psalms, p. 118, published in 1710, and often cited in the following Observations.

be the means of introducing, in the Service of our Church, tenets not in unison with the doctrine of it.

But deviations of this kind have been assumed without such views. Sometimes, upon the mistaken notion, that the Old Version made by Sternhold, Hopkins, and others, was never countenanced by any public authority, any formal or legitimate direction as to the usage of it. Sometimes, upon the pretence of strains, more poetical than those in the Old Version, being required in aid of devotion. And sometimes, in consequence of a belief, expressed indeed with truly devotional temper, that Hymns from the New Testament, as well as Psalms from the Old, are wanting to a Christian congregation.

I. The first of these assumptions, which is usually accompanied with the charge of connivance in regard to the introduction of the Old Version, as a part of our public worship, I^b shew to be untenable; and I also repel the unfounded charge. I state the^c circum-

^b In Chapter the Second, throughout.

^c Chap. II. p. 35.

stance of a Licence for printing this Translation of the Psalms, at the commencement of the reign of Elizabeth; and ^d a royal privilege even for a part of them only, which almost immediately followed the publication of the whole. Since this statement, I have inspected the earliest register belonging to the Stationers' Company, in which those printers, to whom royal patents or licences were granted, were required to have their privilege recorded; and therein, among the entries from July 1561 to July 1562, is the following. "Received of John Daye for *his lycense for pryntinge the residewe of the Psalms not heretofore prynted*, so that this maketh up the hole, iiijd." Here seems a reference to a former privileged portion of the Psalms, which we may safely believe to be the collection of Sternhold's and others published in 1551, and ^e described in the following pages; which was printed by king Edward the Sixth's printer *cum privilegio*, &c. though the register commences not till the reign of Mary. I bring together several other facts, which also illustrate the

^d Chap. II. p. 38.

^e Chap. I. pp. 8. 19.

public reception and usage of the Old Version ; which rescue queen Elizabeth, (herself indeed a^f composer of Metrical Psalmody,) from the imputation of conniving at this Translation, and the Church of England from the meanness also of adopting and continuing to use what is said to have been connived at, or to have only passed uncensured, instead of having experienced all the countenance which could be desired.

II. As to the next assumption, (which sometimes has exhibited only metrical forms of writing, distinguished neither by fidelity of translation, nor by general correctness of imagery and diction,) I think that the observation of Bishop Beveridge, especially in regard to the faithfulness and plainness of the Old Version, which I have^g copied, completely overthrows it. The observation applies

^f Both in the early and latter part of her days, her Majesty thus employed herself; “two little anthems or things in metre,” of her composition, having been licensed to her printer in 1578; and in 1548 her metrical version of the 13th Psalm having been published in a work by Bale. See Ritson’s Bibliograph. Poetica. p. 365.

^g Chap. IV. p. 87, et. seq.

even to translations of exquisite poetical merit. I admit indeed that departures from harmony, and taste, are found in the Old Version. But I shew, that it also possesses proper qualifications of religious poetry: and cold or dull must be the feelings of that mind, which is not awakened to devotion by ^h passages which I have cited; to which indeed I might have added others, the popularity of which will, probably, cease only with the language. The plainness, however, of the Psalms in Sternhold's collection has indeed long occasioned ⁱ the interference of pretended refinement, often in the language, sometimes in the ^k sentiment. Of this the first who took notice, was Fuller, the Church-historian; who observes, that such "^llabours were never generally received in the Church;" yet he trusted that, "though the fabrick [of the collection] may stand unremoved for the main, some bad contrivance therein may be mended, and the bald rhymes in some

^h Chap. IV. p. 101, et seq.

ⁱ Ibid.

^k Chap. IV. p. 102.

^l Chap. IV. p. 91. 96.

places get a new nap, which would not much discompose the memory of the people." This remark perhaps gave rise to much arbitrary alteration in these Psalms; so much, as to occasion a distinguished antiquary and scholar indignantly to exclaim, nearly a century since, that " throughout the whole Book of Psalms are strange alterations, all for the worse;" and that " if Sternhold and Hopkins were then living, they would proceed against the innovators as cheats: a liberty, which, to say no more of their intolerable alterations, ought by no means to be permitted, or approved of, by such as are for uniformity, and have any regard for the old English-Saxon tongue." For such translations of the Psalms as are made in a style far above the comprehension of a country congregation, and many such there are of great merit, I here say no more than that they want the main engine of instruction, accommodation to the understandings of all.

^m Hearne, Glossary to Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle, 1724, under the word REDE. Bishop Beveridge agrees with him in this animadversion, Def. of the Old Vers. p. 74, et seq.

III. The third assumption is in consequence, it has been alleged, of our not having Christian Hymns in the public service of our Church; and that there is a necessity, that our metrical tribute of praise should not be confined to the Jewish Psalms of David. The merits of Sternhold's original collection are here overlooked. For in that collection theⁿ spiritual meaning of the Psalms, and the prophetic reference to Christ and his kingdom in many of them, are prefixed to each; and it is to be lamented that, in modern editions, this summary of contents has been long omitted; that this illustration of^o "David as a Christian divine in spirit," (to use the words of Archbishop Parker, the great ornament and support of the Reformed Church of England,) should still not be before the eyes of those, who are attached to the use of this venerable Psalmody. But, not to mention this help to Christian devotion in the Psalms, some have still thought the introduction of Hymns in our public worship not absolutely necessary. A late most learned and

ⁿ Chap. IV. p. 97.

^o Chap. IV. p. 101.

amiable ^p dignitary of our Church, who considered the present subject with great attention, has observed, that “^q upon the whole it is much safer, and more consonant to the principles of a Reformed Church, *to confine ourselves wholly to the Psalms of David*: and what subject of religion is there, which these cannot supply? Penitence, contrition, prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, are here prepared ready for use; and as we allow these compositions to proceed from divine inspiration, what more can we require? Dr. Watts, however, is of opinion, that the sentiments of David are not always suitable to our wants, or hopes; nor arrive at the pitch, Christian knowledge aspires to. But for the first a remedy may be found by proper selection; and for the last, it is better to bear an inconvenience, which Revelation has not vouchsafed to remove, than to fly to uncertain expedients of our own. Christ has not, by means of his Apostles or Evangelists, supplied this deficiency: we may

^p Dr. Vincent, Dean of Westminster, in *Considerations on Parochial Music*, 1790.

^q *Considerations on Parochial Music*, p. 38.

presume therefore it is only imaginary : and if a dispensation of this kind had been absolutely requisite for his Church, we may reasonably conclude he would have granted it." To the use of Hymns, in the Service of our United Church, objection has been also lately made in very forcible terms by the ^rbishop of Killaloe. But against the use of private Hymns by private persons, against the composers of such pious songs, I am not presuming either to speak or to adduce opposing authority. It is against the admission of such compositions without proper sanction into the Church ; it is not in behalf of selections of this kind for our public worship, to which are even ^s prefixed addresses in favour of unauthorized metres ;

^r Chap. I. pp. 22, 23.

^s Such as to a Collection of Hymns, printed at York, of which there are several editions ; which address, or preface, contains much of what Mr. Gray has written in his Inquiry into Metrical Psalmody, often noticed in the following pages ; and such as that (not to name several others) which precedes a Selection of Psalms and Hymns, published at Sheffield, by the Rev. T. Cotterill, with which the proceedings noticed in the present work are connected, and for which another Selection, but still like the former not duly authorized, was substituted. See Chap. I. p. 13, et seq.

it is against the possibility of recommending particular tenets not according with the spirit of our Liturgy ; that these pages respectfully yet earnestly plead.

The reader will find, in the present little work, that several metrical translations of the Psalms have been royally privileged, and yet have all yielded to the Old Version ; which, as bishop Beveridge has stated, obtained “such firm possession of the hearts of the people, as well as of the Churches, that it could not be removed or turned out, no, not by a Royal Version, recommended and confirmed by Royal authority ; but still kept its place in the Church, and hath continued to do so all along to these times.” It has been lately asserted, that for a selection from a distinguished Version of the Psalms, to which no legal sanction has ever been given, the ‘Royal sanction was, some years since, solicited and refused. With such refusal the authority of the Old Version, adopted at the Reformation of the Church

^t In the Preface to the Selection of Psalms and Hymns, published at Sheffield by Mr. Cotterill.

of England, seems to me at once acknowledged; as indeed the circumstances of all the privileged Versions testify also that authority, which they evidently required to obtain any admission in Churches, while Sternhold's already possessed it.

I have thus submitted to the reader some interesting particulars, I trust, respecting our Metrical Psalmody; and I beg to add, that I mean no denial of pious intention to such as differ with me upon the subject, in this endeavour to illustrate the maintenance of uniformity in the Service of our Church. Lastly, in the language which the Law of the Land has recorded, I may repeat the judicious opinion, that “^u NOTHING CONDUCTH MORE TO THE HONOUR OF OUR RELIGION, AND THE PROPAGATION THEREOF, THAN AN UNIVERSAL AGREEMENT IN THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF ALMIGHTY GOD.”

^u Act of Uniformity, 14 Charles II.

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CORRECTION.

P. 65. Instead of *subjoined to* his Psalms, read *bound up* with his Psalms. I used the former expression hastily, in consequence of knowing that both compositions had formed one volume in the original binding ; and perhaps Wither had considered this method, having failed in the design of causing his Psalmody to be *bound up* with all Bibles, as an ingenious combination against the Old Metrical Version. But the united effort, if in other instances (as it is probable) these compositions were *bound together*, was not successful, though strains of merit are not wanting in either.

CHAPTER I.

- I. OF AUTHORITY REQUIRED FOR METRICAL PSALMODY TO BE USED IN CHURCHES; AND OF VARIOUS ASSERTIONS CONCERNING THE AUTHORITY, REAL OR ASSUMED OR REPUTED, WHICH RESPECTS THE VERSION OF THIS KIND BY STERNHOLD, HOPKINS, AND OTHERS.—II. THE ASSERTION OF HEYLIN, ONE OF OUR OLD ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORIANS.—III. OF FULLER, HIS CONTEMPORARY.—IV. OF COLLIER.—V. OF WARTON.—VI. OF MASON.—VII. OF THE REV. MR. TATTERSALL.—VIII. OF DR. MALTBY AND OTHERS.—IX. OF MR. VERNON.—X. OF MR. SOUTHEY.—XI. OF THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH.—XII. OF MR. GRAY.—XIII. OF THE BISHOP OF KILLALOE.—XIV. OF THE REV. MR. KENNEDY.—XV. OF A WRITER IN THE BRITISH CRITIC UPON THE WORK OF MR. KENNEDY.
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I. THAT it is not^a lawful nor expedient to use, in the public Service of our Church, any Metrical Psalms or Hymns, which have not received the sanction or permission of public authority, is a position which by many has been practically denied, and a regularity of which the violation is increasing. This

^a See the opinions of the Chancellor of the Diocese of York, of the Bishops of Peterborough and Killaloe, and of the Rev. Mr. Kennedy, in the IXth, XIth, XIIIth, and XIVth sections of this chapter.

want of attention to legal observance, has arisen from assertions hastily made and believed, that the Old Version of the Psalms in metre by Sternhold, Hopkins, and others, never possessed the *proper sanction*; that it crept into the House of God by *connivance*; and, though expressed in the title-page of it as *allowed* to be sung in Churches, that it *assumed allowance*; or that it was *permitted* rather than *allowed*, (in which distinction *allowed* is intended by Heylin the assertor for *approved*;) that it was never, or in no respect, *enjoined* or *directed* to congregations; that it has exercised in vain the utmost care and curiosity to discover *any authority for it, either from the Crown or Convocation*; and therefore it has also been assumed, that the admission of Psalms, and Hymns, into our Church, from Versions professedly unauthorized, may hence be justified^b.

^b See *Free and Candid Disquisitions relating to the Church of England*, &c. 8vo. 1749. p. 247. "Collier observes, that Sternhold's Translation stands upon *no authority*, either from the Crown or Convocation. *If so*; may not any other, especially any better, translation be used, with as much freedom, and upon *as good ground*, as we use that bad one?" The author of this remark, we see, speaks with hesitation; but I need not say, that many have assumed the liberty for which he only argues. Witness the publications of several new Metrical Versions of the Psalms of David, and Selections from such Versions as never have been privileged, set forth, of late years, for the use of Churches and Chapels without requisite authority. See also Mr. Tattersall's argument in the VIIth section of this chapter.

II. HEYLIN, one of our ecclesiastical historians; has made such assertions. And accordingly to his authority appeals against the libelled Version of Sternhold, &c. are often found. Hence he has been cited, as though he were unanswerable, in a recent publication^c, of some ingenuity, stating that “these Psalms were, by little and little, brought into the Church; *permitted, rather than allowed*, to be sung before and after Sermons; afterwards printed and bound up with the Common Prayer Book; and, at last, *added by the Stationers at the end of the Bible*. For though it is expressed, in the title-page of these singing Psalms, that they were *set forth and allowed to be sung in all Churches before and after Morning and Evening Prayer, and also before and after Sermons*; yet this allowance seems rather to have been a connivance than an approbation; no such allowance being any where found by such as have been most industrious and concerned in the search. At first it was pretended only that the said Psalms should be sung before and after Morning and Evening Prayer, and before and after Sermons; which shews that they were not to be intermingled in the public Liturgy. But in some tract of time, as the Puritan faction grew in strength

^c An Inquiry into Historical Facts relative to Parochial Psalmody, in Reference to the Remarks of the Right Rev. Herbert, Lord Bishop of Peterborough. 8vo. York. 1821. The Dedication of this Inquiry to the Rev. H. Godfrey, of Queen's College, Cambridge, bears the name of Jona. Gray, York. See p. 25, of the work.

and confidence, they prevailed so far in most places, as to thrust the *Te Deum*, the *Benedictus*, the *Magnificat*, and the *Nunc Dimittis*, quite out of the Church." These contemptuous notices by Heylin had been also adduced by ^d another gentleman, in remarks on our Metrical Psalmody; not however without adverting to the *severity* of the old historian, upon the Version in question. Heylin, I must add, shifts his charges: he says *first* of these Psalms, that "they were *published by themselves, or at the end of the Psalter*, with the declaration of being set forth and allowed, &c." as already stated. *Afterwards*, he relates that "some men of good note and quality, who otherwise deserved well enough of the Church of England, bent their wits and pens against the artificial music then retained in the Church, and laboured with earnestness to have their own tunes publicly introduced into all the Churches. Which that they might the better do, *they procured the Psalms in English metre to be bound in the same volume with the English Liturgy, and sometimes with the Bible also*; setting them forth as being *allowed* (so the title tells us,) *to be sung in all Churches, before and after Morning and Evening Prayer, as also before and after Sermons*; but with what truth and honesty, we have heard before!" With real truth and honesty, I can say; and will in due time and order shew.

III. FULLER, indeed, the contemporary of Hey-

^d Rev. Mr. Tattersall. See Sect. VII.

^e Hist. of the Presbyterians. 1670. p. 248, et seq.

lin, a man of most extensive reading and tenacious memory, has, in his ^f Church History, spoken, though with no friendly voice, as to the poetry of these Psalms, certainly with no hostility as to the authority of them ; for (referring to their origin) he says, they were, “ *if not publicly commanded, generally permitted to be sung in all Churches.*”

IV. COLLIER, however, in his ^g Ecclesiastical History, uses almost the very words of Heylin. “ When the Puritan faction grew up in strength and assurance, this metre made the ancient Hymns disrelished ; and threw the *Te Deum*, the *Magnificat*, &c. out of the Church in many places. Thus sometimes things, *connived at* at first, govern at last.” And then, as to the *allowance* of the Old Version, he adds, “ Those, who have searched into the matter with the utmost care and curiosity, could never discover *any authority* (for these Psalms) either *from the Crown or the Convocation.*”

V. WARTON, the accomplished historian of English poetry, admits at once what Collier and Heylin have asserted. “ ^h Not to insist,” he says, “ on

^f Cent. XVI. Book VII.

^g Cited by Mr. Gray. Inquiry, ut supr. p. 25. The author of the Free and Candid Disquisitions, cited in a preceding note, justly observes, that “ Collier, with Dr. Heylin and some others, seems to be *against the use of Psalmody*, and speaks rather *too slightly of it.*” P. 247.

^h Cited by Mr. Gray, Inq. ut supr. p. 26. See also what Mason says, as to Warton, in the next section of the present chapter.

the incompatibility of these Metrical Psalms with the spirit of our Liturgy, and the barbarism of their style, it should be remembered, *that they were never admitted into our Church by lawful authority.* They were first introduced by the Puritans, and *afterwards continued by connivance. But they never received any royal approbation, or parliamentary sanction.*" Mr. Warton has also observed, that the "infectious phrensy of sacred song reached England at the very critical point of time, when it had just embraced the Reformation; and the New Psalmody was obtruded on the New English Liturgy by some,—who favoured the discipline of Geneva, and who wished to abolish not only the choral mode of worship in general, but more particularly to suppress the *Te Deum, Benedictus, Magnificat, Jubilate, Nunc Dimittis*, and the rest of the Liturgic Hymns, which were supposed to be contaminated by their long and ancient connection with the Roman missal, or at least in their prosaic form to be unsuitable to the new system of worship."

VI. MASON, another elegant scholar and poet, has considered the *allowance*, expressed in the title page of the Version, as an *assumption* either of Sternhold or his printer; to which he has prefixed some remarks, occasioned partly by the dislike of the preceding writer to Metrical Psalmody; and they are too curious and important to be severed from his consideration.

“ Our Reformers disapproved of Popish Church music,—because it rendered the words of the Liturgy indistinct and unintelligible. They would have been contented not to have received pleasure from it, had the congregation received edification. This not being the case, we have reason to think, that, as Reformation proceeded, the two principal leaders of it, Luther and Calvin, resolved to make a considerable change in its mode of performance. Calvin, who had certainly less music in his soul than the other, rejected both vocal and instrumental harmony, and admitted only unisonous Psalmody. Conveniently for his purpose a part, at least, of a French Translation of the Psalms had been very lately published, and had become popular in the Court where it had its origin ; but this, as it seems, not because it was a Version of Psalms, but a Version in rhyme, and what the taste of the time deemed good poetry. They were not only sung, like ballads, about the streets of Paris, but many of the Court ladies adopted several of them as their peculiar favourites, and honoured them with their own titles. Devotion, it must be believed, had little to do in this matter. It was sufficient for the French, that the Version was fashionable. Calvin thought otherwise. He conceived, that it might be turned to a pious purpose. The verses were easy; and, like the generality of French verse, prosaic enough to

¹ Essays on English Church Music, by William Mason, M.A. Precentor of York. 1795. p. 164, et seq.

be intelligible to the meanest capacity. The melodies, to which they were set, rivalled the words in plainness and simplicity. They, who could read the one, would find little difficulty in learning to sing the other. As therefore it was the protestant father's primary aim to open the Scriptures entirely, which had been so long shut up in a dead language; nothing could come more opportunely to his aid than this Version of the Psalter, which, united with prayer in the vernacular tongue, would enable his congregation not only to understand and join in the supplications of the one, but also become themselves choiristers of the other. This is, I think, *a more true as well as a more candid account of the Reformer's proceeding, than that given by our ingenious poetical historian*, who resolves Calvin's conduct in this matter entirely to prejudice.—About the same time that Marot published his Version in France, T. Sternhold versified^k fifty of the Psalms in England; in the completion of which work he

^k The following is a more correct statement of Sternhold's first attempt, than what Mr. Mason has given. "In 1549, we have a portion of the Psalms published by Sternhold, *thirty-seven* in number; not *fifty-one* as stated by Sir J. Hawkins and Warton. In 1551 Sternhold's Psalms were republished, with *seven* additional ones by John Hopkins. These were soon adopted by the English Calvinists at Geneva; and after undergoing such alterations as to them seemed meet, &c. they were, with the addition of *seven* others by W. Whityngham, at that time residing at Geneva, printed there in 1556. The number *thus* became *fifty-one*; and perhaps it was an hasty sight of this Edition which misled Hawkins and Warton;" (and the

had several coadjutors. *The¹ whole did not appear in print till 1562, and were then attached to the Book of Common Prayer, as allowed to be sung in Churches.* Hence Mr. Warton infers, *that they never received the royal approbation, or obtained parliamentary sanction.* Yet it is clear, that Metrical Psalmody had been adopted in England full^m ten years before Sternhold's Version was published; forⁿ on March 15, 1559, Mr. Veron, a Frenchman by birth, but a learned protestant and parson of St. Martin's, Ludgate, preached at St. Paul's Cross before the Mayor and Aldermen; and, *after Sermon done, they all sung in common a Psalm in metre, as it seems now was frequently done; the custom being brought to us from abroad*

authority of both I may add, most probably misled Mason.) Dr. H. Cotton, in the Christian Remembrancer, June 1821. p. 327, 328.

¹ The Version of *the whole Book of Psalms* collected into English metre by T. Sternhold, J. Hopkins, and others, was published by John Day, in 1562. Mr. Gray remarks, that Bishop Marsh dates *the introduction* of this Version in king Edward VIth's reign; but *the real date is September 1562.*" Inq. ut. supr. p. 26. Bishop Marsh seems to be quite correct as to the introduction of so much of Sternhold's Version into the Church, *as in the reign of Edward had been published.* See Sect. XI.

^m This must be a mistake of Mr. Mason, or his printer, for *three years.*

ⁿ Mr. Mason here refers to the learned Antiquary Strype, who, in his Annals, gives other instances of this usage in 1559-60. And *these facts* occasion Mr. Gray to assert, that Metrical Psalmody *was at this period introduced into the Church.*" Inq. ut. supr. p. 17.

by the exiles. Hence we may infer, that if Queen Elizabeth patronized Cathedral music exclusively, she did not interdict psalmodical; and therefore three years after so public an exercise of it, *Sternhold, or his printer, might fairly enough assert, that his Version was allowed to be sung in Churches.*—The late professor of poetry has [also] in his History declared, that^o ‘he reprobates any Version at all of the Psalms, especially if intended for the use of the Church.’—On this subject he had his prejudices, which seem to have originated from *an outrageous zeal against every thing that he deemed puritanical*; and as Metrical Psalmody was certainly much used in conventicles, before it was practised in our Established Church, it is no wonder that he was disinclined to allow it a place, in which he thought nothing but the *pealing organ* should accompany a *full-voiced choir*. I take^p these phrases from Milton, because he was a *puritan poet*, though perhaps not deeply tinged with *the prejudices of the sect*, when he wrote the verses [in which they occur;] and I venture to call Mr. Warton’s *prejudices also, though of a contrary kind*; because in this instance he has not produced any sufficient reason in support of them. For was *Psalmody*, let me ask, not to be introduced into offices of devotion, merely because it was *metrical*? Surely not; for metre had long prevailed in the

^o Hist. of Eng. Poetry, vol. iii. p. 179.

^p Il Penseroso, ver. 161, 162.

Church previous to the Reformation. Witness the *Stabat Mater*, and almost all the Hymns to the Virgin; witness Henry the Eighth's English anthem, performed most probably after the Church had become Protestant, and when Henry had quarrelled with the See of Rome. Or was it not to be used, because it was Psalmody? The same reason would weigh against the ancient rituals; for select Psalms, though not the whole Psalter, had been used at matins, vespers, &c. in the Church from a very remote antiquity. His reason then can only be, that a Version of the Psalms in metre must, of necessity, be bad poetry. That few, if any, of the Versions of the Book of Psalms, can deserve the name of good poetry throughout, I am ready to allow him; but this I cannot think arises so much from the impossibility of the thing, as from the false idea which has prevailed concerning the best mode of rendering Hebrew poetry into English verse."

VII. The Rev. Mr. TATTERSALL, in^a his curious observations upon our Metrical Psalmody, says, that "the only clause which can be discovered, or which can be supposed, to give an allowance for the public use of the Version of Sternhold and Hopkins in the Church, is taken from the Statute of 2 and

^a Preface to Merrick's Version of the Psalms, which are divided into stanzas, and adapted to the purposes of public or private devotion. By the Rev. W. T. Tattersall, M.A. 1797.

3 Edw. VI. for *Uniformity of Service*; which contains the following proviso; *that it shall be lawful for all men as well in Churches, Chapels, Oratories, or other places, to use openly any Psalm or Prayer taken out of the Bible, at any due time, not letting or omitting the Service or any part thereof mentioned in the said Book.* ' *If it is from hence only, that the Psalms of Sternhold and Hopkins were said to be set forth and allowed to be sung, &c.* I conceive that the same indulgence is granted by this Act to every other Version, and even to all Prayers and Selections, provided they are really translated from the inspired writings; and it should seem *that any other Hymns are excluded.* This observation is in some degree confirmed by the following passage in a book of Ceremonies, published in the year 1539. The sober, discreet, and devout singing, music, and playing with organs, used in the Church, in the service of God, are ordained to move and stir the people to the sweetness of God's word, *the which is there sung*; and by that sweet harmony both to excite them to prayer and devotion, and also to put them in remembrance of the heavenly triumphant Church, where is everlasting joy, continual laud, and praise to God."

VIII. The learned Dr. MALTBY and his asso-

' This is a proper qualification. It is an *if* of similar import in the passage cited, from the *Free Disquisitions*, in the second note on this Chapter.

ciates, in the elegant Preface to their^a Selection of Psalms and Hymns, have considered both the New and the Old Version as in an exactly similar situation. “In the opinion of those pious and learned men, who contributed so greatly to the signal event of the Reformation, it does not seem that Psalmody was by any means a *necessary* part of Divine worship. The compilers of our admirable Liturgy appear rather to have consulted the taste and feelings of the common people, than to have followed the dictates of their own judgment, *when they introduced a clause into the Act which regulated the Public Service of the Church*, admitting that ‘it was lawful to use *other Psalms* or Prayers taken out of the Bible, so these in the Book were not omitted.’ *Both the Old Version in which Sternhold had so conspicuous a share, and the New which was undertaken about an hundred and fifty years afterwards, were introduced into the Church by permission, or at most by recommendation, and not by express direction either from the Crown or Convocation.*”

IX. Mr. VERNON, Chancellor of the Diocese of York, has delivered his^c opinion as to Sternhold’s

^a First published in 1815; again in 1820.

^c Printed in Mr. Gray’s Inquiry, p. 47, et. seq. It is proper to add, that the Chancellor of the Diocese also said, that the Archbishop of York would be happy to act as mediator between the parties; that he thought it much for the interest of religion, that a compromise should take place; and that, agreeably to this kind suggestion, they ultimately referred the

Version, in a "question for his decision upon the admissibility of Articles imputing to a Clergyman irregularity in introducing, and causing to be sung, in his Church, certain Hymns, and a Version of Psalms, not permitted by any lawful authority;" upon pronouncing which decision the learned Chancellor has observed, that his "judgment was founded on considerations strictly legal, *in which view he was bound to say that this article was admissible.*" Yet he adds, that "for the Version of Sternhold and Hopkins, notwithstanding the preference assigned to it by the learned Bishop Horsley, *he could discover no regular authority, though perhaps it may be presumed from immemorial unquestioned usage.* The question of their insertion as part of the Liturgy, established by 2 and 3 Edw. VI. was then "debated in Parliament, and carried in the negative. A Version of the first nine Psalms, by Dod, was privileged by James I, in 1603; and the King himself composed a Version of the whole, which was recommended, as well as allowed, by his successor. The Version of Tate and Brady was sanctioned by King William III. in Council, and recommended by the Bishop of London to the use of his Clergy. There is, lastly, another sanction

dispute to the amicable adjustment of his Grace, which is related by Mr. Gray, in his Inquiry, &c. pp. 53. 74, 75.

" This cannot refer to *the complete Collection* of Sternhold and his assistants, which was not even formed in the time of Edward VI. Of the point as to *insertion, debated in Parliament*, Burnet takes no notice.

in the reign of George I. granted by the Lords Justices, representing him in Council, to the Version of Sir Richard Blackmore; and this is the more remarkable, because not only did he, as Tate and Brady had done before him, petition the Sovereign for this bare permission, but the major part of the bench of Bishops concurred in a certificate, ‘approving and recommending it to the King’s allowance.’ Now these Versions [Blackmore’s and Tate and Brady’s] were not even recommended by the King, much less imposed on congregations; they were only ‘allowed and permitted to be used in all Churches, Chapels, and Congregations, as shall think fit to receive the same.’ This is a decisive indication of the opinion of the composers, *that such sanction was required*; and of the Bishops, *that even their approbation would not suffice to authorize their introduction in their respective Dioceses*. In 1559, Queen Elizabeth issued some Injunctions, relative to the practice of the Church; in which this provision occurs, ‘It may be permitted, that in the beginning or end of Common Prayer, either at morning or evening, there may be sung an Hymn, or such like Song, to the praise of Almighty God.’ But this was addressed * solely to Collegiate Churches. It seems,

* “ The provision has been more generally considered as a concession *in favour of the Psalms in metre*. The saving clause, or *nevertheless*, which permits a *Hymn or song*, implies it to be an innovation upon Church music. Now what other Hymns or songs, except Metrical Psalms or hymns, can be

then, on the whole, that for whatever may be supplementary to the Liturgy established by Statute, and not repugnant thereto, *authority must emanate from the Head of the Church.*"

X. Mr. SOUTHEY, the distinguished Laureate of the present day, has also briefly said, what in a popular work however cannot but have been extensively circulated, that "the *Psalmody* of our Churches was a popular innovation, during the first years of the Reformation; and the Psalms of Sternhold and Hopkins were *allowed to be sung, not enjoined.*" The Laureate has also circulated herewith a *pleasant mistake*, in saying that "these Psalms were conceived to be erected in *conviviality* and opposition to the reading Psalms;" for Fuller's (the old informant's) real word, however quaint, is *corrivality*.

shewn to have been introduced into the Church about this period? None whatever. But these were introduced during the very year in which this Injunction was issued. Again: the *Hymn or song* is permitted to be used *at the beginning or end of Morning or Evening Prayer*. Now, in the Cathedral Service, no such practice can be shewn to have existed or been introduced. But the Metrical Psalms were used precisely in the mode which the Injunction permits; that is, they were not allowed to be blended with the service, or to intervene during the performance of it; but only to be used *before or after* Common Prayer." Mr. Gray's Inquiry, ut. supr. p. 16. See also the next Chapter of the present Work, Sect. III.

⁷ Life of John Wesley, 2d. edit. vol. ii. p. 221. p. 589.

XI. The BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH thus powerfully illustrates the subject. “² The Acts of Uniformity, though the *letter* of them does not extend to metrical compositions, are at least by the *spirit* of them decidedly adverse to that liberty, in which too many of the Clergy at present indulge. The Act for the Uniformity of Service, which passed in the second year of Edward VI; the Act for the Uniformity of Common Prayer and Divine Service in the Church, which passed in the first year of Elizabeth; and, lastly, the Act which passed in the fourteenth year of Charles II. and is commonly known as the Act of Uniformity; have no less for their object a uniformity of *doctrine*, than a uniformity in *external worship*. Indeed the latter would be of no use without the former. And how is it possible to maintain a uniformity of doctrine in our Churches, if every Clergyman is at liberty to introduce into the service of his Church whatever Psalms or Hymns he thinks proper? Indeed our Acts of Uniformity, as well as our Articles of Religion, must thus be rendered nugatory. It will be of no avail to preserve a consistency of doctrine throughout the *Prayers* of the Church, if different doctrines are inculcated by the aid of *Psalms* and *Hymns*.—Our Ecclesiastical Establishment requires, that neither Psalms nor Hymns should be admitted in the *public Service of the Church*, till they have

² Appendix to his Lordship's Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese of Peterborough, 1820. p. 32. et seq.

received the sanction or permission of *public authority*. Otherwise, the Constitution of the Church, established in this country, must be more defective than the Constitution of any other Established Church whatsoever. If that, which forms a part of our *public service*, is not subject to the regulation of *public authority*, our public service, as far as that portion extends, which in many places bears a large proportion to the whole Service, is exempted from that controul which is indispensably necessary in all public concerns, whether of a civil or of a religious nature. But the Constitution of our Church is *not* so defective as the practice, now under consideration, implies. It is *not* lawful to use, in the public service of our Church, any Psalms or Hymns which have not received the sanction or permission of public authority. The public authority necessary for this purpose is not the authority of Parliament, but the authority of *the King*^a, as *Head of the Established Church*.—The Old Version of the Psalms by Sternhold, Hopkins, and others, *has the sanction of royal authority*. It is true, that no Act of the King in Council, as far as I know, is now on record, by which they were formally allowed at the introduction of them, which^b was in the reign of Edward VI. But if the

^a See also Sect. IX. XIII. of the present Chapter.

^b So many of these Psalms as were published in the reign of Edw. VI. are believed to have been then allowed as Metrical Psalmody. See the Bishop of Killaloe's remark, Sect. XIII. of the present Chapter. Bishop Beveridge was of the same

royal permission has not been expressed in *that* way, it has in *another*. In every Prayer Book, which contains the Old Version, it is declared *to be set forth and allowed to be sung in all Churches* : but it could not be so allowed except by the King. And the permission of the King is signified by the very act of printing them with the Prayer Book by the King's^c printer, and his continuing to do so time immemorial without contradiction. The royal permission is further signified by the Order of the King in Council *with respect to the New Version*. By that Order the New Version is *allowed and permitted to be used in all such Churches, Chapels, and Congregations, as shall think fit to receive the same*. This Order implies, therefore, that such Congregations as did *not* think fit to receive the same, might retain the *Old Version*.

opinion. In preceding parts of this Chapter, p. 9. Mr. Mason and Mr. Gray fix the time of *allowed* introduction into the Church to the first publication of *the whole of these Psalms* in 1562.

^c The King's printer certainly printed the Edition of Sternhold's thirty-seven Psalms, with the addition of fourteen more by Hopkins and Whitynham, which has been described in a preceding note as printed in 1551. Ames dates it in 1552. Hist. Acc. of Printing, p. 208. But the first complete collection of the Metrical Psalms by Sternhold, Hopkins, and others was printed, not by the King's printer, but by John Day, to whom a licence for printing the work was granted, and who was patronized by Archbishop Parker. In the course of time it was printed by the King's printer, and still continues so to be. On this point see more in the next Chapter.

The Old Version, therefore, has the sanction or permission of royal authority as well as the New."

XII. Mr. GRAY, a gentleman of York, contends that "the^d royal authority, as to *Metrical Psalms*, cannot extend beyond a *connivance* or *permission*. The King has no right to *command* or *enforce* the reception of a Metrical Translation. The people would have a right to answer, we abide by the Book of Common Prayer; we use the Psalms therein pointed to be sung, and the *Te Deum*, and other Hymns therein prescribed: If we require any further singing, we may take an anthem out of the Bible after the third Collect: Our Liturgy is complete in all its parts without the Metrical Psalms; and they are a tautology unknown to the Liturgy, and to its compilers." After this declaration, we are frequently reminded, by the same writer, of the *connivance* already stated; and are presented with an *argument* hence apparently secure in the premises, and certainly liberal as to the *inference* or *conclusion*. "Congregational singing", he says, "gradually found its way into Parish Churches; and Queen Elizabeth found it her policy to permit, or at least to *connive at*, the practice." Again, with the statement a little softened: "The^f fact is certain, that, *either by permission or tacit connivance*, Metrical Psalmody was introduced into the Church," at the beginning

^d Inquiry, ut. supr. p. 11. . . . Ibid. p. 14.

^f Ibid. p. 17.

of the reign of Elizabeth. Again : “^s It was wise policy to *connive at* a practice in itself irregular. The Reformed Episcopal Church was in its infancy ; and exposed to danger from Popery on the one hand, and from the Calvinistic discipline of Geneva on the other. Had the introduction of the New Psalmody been *too rigidly prohibited*, and liturgical singing too strictly enforced, the common people might have been rendered hostile to the newly established forms”. Yet once more, with the *argument and inference* to which I have alluded : “^b The same wise policy, which induced a *connivance at* Metrical Psalmody at its first introduction under the arbitrary reign of Elizabeth, pleads for *a still more extended toleration in an age of free and unlimited liberty of worship.*” The Author concludes, from what he has stated, that “ he does not feel justified in classing the Old Version *amongst those which have received the royal permission.*”

XIII. The BISHOP OF KILLALOE has subscribed to the argument of the Bishop of Peterborough, with observations also upon our Metrical Psalmody, accompanying his concurrence, than which none more energetic have ever been bestowed on the subject. Perhaps, as being addressed to the Clergy of an Irish Diocese, these observations may not be generally known to the Clergy of England ; and therefore no apology can be required for the long

^s Inquiry, ut. supr. p. 22. ^b Ibid. p. 55.

extract, from the Charge of the vigilant prelate, which follows. His lordship directed queries to the Rural Deans of his Diocese, among which was this, *Is any thing sung in the Church besides the authorized Versions of the Psalms ; namely, the Old by Sternhold and Hopkins, and the New by Brady and Tate ?* And thus he explains the cause of this especial query. “¹ The epithet *authorized*, here annexed to the Metrical Psalms used in the United Church of the kingdom, embraces that regulation with respect to the matter of our singing in divine service, to which it appears to me that our practice should be submitted. For the principle, which pervades the public worship of the Church, is *uniformity, regulated by the competent authority*. The several Acts of Parliament, relating to public worship, from Edward the Sixth’s time down to that of Charles the Second, proceed upon this notion. The Canons distinctly recognise the same principle ; as will appear on reference to the 14th English, and the 3rd and 7th Irish Canons. So that if there be any part of the public worship proposed for the use of a congregation, which cannot be brought within the rule of this principle, *it cannot be justified, and ought not to be admitted*. Now this will at once banish from the worship of the Church all that variety of modern compositions under the name of Hymns, *which*

¹ Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Killaloe, July 25, 1821. p. 38, et seq.

without any shadow or semblance of authority, have been introduced in many places into our national service ; and which, I must be allowed to say, so far as I have seen, have very little even in themselves to recommend them ; and too frequently can be considered in no other light, than as tricking out the chaste and matronly simplicity of the Church with the meretricious trappings of the conventicle. However, let the character of these compositions be allowed to be as unexceptionable and as meritorious as their warmest advocates can represent it ; still, I say, they are deviations from the uniformity of our public worship, and they are not sanctioned by any competent authority ; and therefore I see not how any minister can be justified for admitting them into the service of the Established Church. But the two Versions of the Psalms, before specified, stand upon a very different footing. And here it will be hardly necessary to contend, that no compositions of themselves can be so well adapted for our devotional exercises in this department of worship, as those sacred effusions of thanksgiving, prayer, and praise, which David and other ‘ holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.’ Accordingly it was provided by the first Act for the Uniformity of Divine Service, in the year 1548, being the second year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth, that ‘ it shall be lawful for all men, as well in Churches, Chapels, Oratories, or other places, to use openly any Psalm or Prayer taken out of the Bible at any due time, not letting

or omitting thereby the Service or any part thereof :
 A provision this, which is considered by Bishop
^b Burnet, Strype, and others, *as giving authority to
 the singing of Metrical Psalms in public which
 had been previously sung without authority.* The
 question, then, which interests us, is simply this ;
 whether the Metrical Versions of the Psalms, which
 are annexed to our Common Prayer Books, are
 recommended by sufficient authority to warrant us
 in the use of them. Now *the title-page of the
 Old Version of the Psalms* bears upon it, that
 they ‘ *are set forth and allowed to be sung in all
 Churches, of all the people together.*’ And although
 there is some uncertainty about the form, in which
that allowance was originally expressed, yet a
 very strong argument for its actual validity is de-
 rived from the following indisputable facts : namely,
 that this notice has been, from the year 1575 down-
 wards, continually prefixed to the Old Version of
 the Psalms without any contradiction or objection
 on the part of the King, *whose authority, as supreme
 Head of the Church in this kingdom, and as the*

^b The Bishop of Killaloe refers to Burnet’s Hist. of the Reformation, Part II. Book I. 1548. And to Strype’s Ecclesiast. Memorials, Book I. Chap. ii. And to page viii. of the Preface to *A Collection of Psalm Tunes for the use of the Church of England, including those harmonized by Allison in the time of Queen Elizabeth*, edited by William Cross, Oxford, 1818. The same opinion has been entertained by Mr. Tattersall, and by Dr. Maltby and his associates. See Sect. VII, VIII. of the present Chapter.

person empowered in that capacity to authorize such Translations of the Scripture as shall be used by the Church, is that to which the notice alludes; that the Version, which is the subject of the notice, has been during that course of years constantly printed and bound up with our Bibles and Common Prayer Books, even those which are printed by the King's printer himself; and that they have during the same period been constantly used in such congregations, as have thought fit to use them, with the general concurrence, and in some cases with the express approbation, of the Spiritual Governors of the Church, to whom 'the appeasing of all diversity, and the resolution of all doubts', concerning the prescribed Service of the Church is by law specially referred, and of whom it is to be supposed, that they would of themselves have interfered to prevent or correct a deviation from the authorized Service, if the use of this Version of the Psalms could have been properly so considered. But the New Version of the Psalms stands upon plain and express authority. For upon the petition of the persons, by whom that Version had been made, 'humbly praying his Majesty's royal allowance, that it might be used in such congregations as should think fit to receive it,' his Majesty was pleased to order in Council, in the year 1696, 'that the said New Version of the Psalms in English metre be, and the same is, hereby allowed and permitted to be used in all such Churches, Chapels, and Congregations, as shall think fit to receive the same.' This

Order of the King in Council then is our authority, and it is a very plain and significant authority, for our use of the New Metrical Version of the Psalms in our Churches. It is also by implication, as Bishop Marsh has well observed in the Appendix to his late Charge at Peterborough, an allowance that *'such congregations, as did not think fit to receive the New, might retain the Old Version.* So that by this Order, independently of the previous claim asserted in the title-page, *'the Old Version has the sanction or permission of the Royal Authority as well as the New.'* It is evident, then, that *these two Versions of the Psalms* stand upon a footing totally different from that of the compositions to which I before adverted. They both profess to have, and one of them directly and expressly has, and by inference and implication the other has also, *authority to be used in all such Churches as shall think fit to receive them.* They have accordingly been received, and are in use in most Churches of the United Kingdom, with the tacit or avowed sanction of those, whose business it is to watch over the Service of the Church. If, notwithstanding this, any clergyman, from conscientious scruples about the sufficiency of their authority, or even from any objection which he may entertain to the Versions themselves, declines the use of either or both of them ; he is, I apprehend, at liberty to exercise his discretion ; for *neither of the Versions is prescribed and commanded ; they are each only permitted and allowed.* But what I at the same

time contend for is, and I desire to state it as my deliberate judgment, that *no Clergyman whatever is at liberty to introduce such composition, as I have before spoken of, into his Church, in preference or in addition to the Psalms ; or to introduce any other Version of the Psalms in preference, or in addition to those which we have been now considering ; because he cannot plead for their introduction that they are permitted and allowed by any authority at all.*"

XIV. The Rev. Mr. KENNEDY, the author of a very useful ¹ publication on the Music and Words of Psalmody, observes, that "there are to furnish matter for Psalmody, two Metrical Versions in our Common Prayer Book, commonly called the Old and the New ; *both of which may be considered as sanctioned in the Church.* The former, that of Sternhold and Hopkins, *at first introduced by sufferance, was afterwards generally adopted, and is expressly stated in the Prayer Book to be set forth and allowed to be sung in Churches.*" This interesting writer then expresses his entire agreement with the argument of the very learned Bishop of Peterborough, in respect to the *allowance* of this Version. Afterwards he says, ^m "the admission of *unlicensed* Hymns into our Churches, in connection with Psalms from *unauthorized* Versions, has been very common ; and many clergy-

¹ Thoughts on Psalmody, &c. 1821. p. 36.

^m Ibid. p. 91.

men of great respectability, have considered the use of them not only desirable, but legal; an opinion which has been partly founded on the Injunction of Queen Elizabeth, in the year 1559. *It may be permitted, that in the beginning, or in the end of Common Prayer, either at morning or evening, there may be sung a Hymn or such like song, to the praise of Almighty God.* It is now wholly unnecessary to enter into a discussion of their ⁿ *legality*, as it has lately been referred to some of the Courts of Judicature. It is here only intended to shew the *inexpediency* of their being used *without* authority. It must be acknowledged, that there are books now in use, compiled by men of sense and learning, for the singing part of our worship, in which there are no exceptionable, and some excellent, Hymns. But single instances of such discriminating choice, can never justify the presumption that equal judgment will be displayed in every similar case, and *that no evil can arise from every individual being allowed to admit Hymns into our Service at his pleasure.* We are furnished by our Church with an established Form of Prayer, and are forbidden the public use of any other, chiefly for these weighty reasons. 1st. That by having a known and approved Form, we may be enabled really to pray ourselves, instead of merely listening to extemporaneous effusions from

ⁿ Mr. Kennedy here alludes to the case brought before Mr. Vernon. See Sect. IX.

the lips of others. 2dly. That *uniformity may be preserved*, and that all the members of our communion may worship God with one heart and with one voice. 3dly. That the whole of the Service may be expressed in a manner worthy of the Church, and best fitted to answer its important design. And 4thly, (what is still of more consequence,) that *it may neither contain nor countenance any errors of doctrine*. It will not be contended that in our Psalmody, as in the Public Prayers, there is a necessity for such strict uniformity, that every congregation must be using the same words at the same time; yet, in their general purport, the reasons above stated, with ° others of a peculiar nature, appear to render it equally *expedient*, that no Hymns should be sung in the Church which are not taken from a collection *sanctioned by the same legal authority*."

XV. The writer of an article, upon the work of the preceding author, in a ^p publication ever attentive to the maintenance and illustration of sound theology, has asserted, that "our present congre-

• As that many "metrical effusions," which have been written and selected for the service of the Church *without authority*, "are at one time dark and gloomy; at another, light, coarse, and familiar: and not a few of them resemble amatory madrigals, full of unbecoming warmth and endearment, a mixture of the flesh and the spirit, with little of that reverence and solemnity which ought ever to be found in the addresses of man to the Supreme Being." Thoughts on Psalmody, p. 95.

^p British Critic, Oct. 1821. p. 340. et seq.

gational Psalmody was *introduced by slow degrees, and for some time met with great opposition* : for it was suspected, and not altogether without reasonable grounds, that the favourers of Metrical Psalms secretly intended, by their introduction, to supersede the Cathedral service altogether : and as they were also the advocates for many injurious innovations, and, had they been able, would have overturned the whole ritual and discipline of our Church, and built up the doctrines of Calvin and the parity of Presbyterianism upon the ruins of Episcopacy, the Liturgy, and the Articles ; all their designs were viewed with jealousy, and resisted with vigilance, by the supporters of our established ecclesiastical polity and doctrine. And although Archbishop Parker was undoubtedly a favourer of Metrical Psalmody, having himself prepared a Version of the whole Book of Psalms, and engaged the celebrated composer Tallis to set them to music ; yet *he seems to have taken no steps to introduce his own Version, or to regulate the performance of congregational Psalmody, by ecclesiastical authority.* The Metrical Versions, which we possess, are the work of private individuals : they have indeed been introduced into our Churches by royal allowance, and have received the additional sanction of episcopal recommendation ; but *their use, though permitted, has never been enjoined.*"

CHAPTER II.

I. OF FACTS WHICH ILLUSTRATE THE SANCTION OF AUTHORITY BELONGING TO THE OLD VERSION.—II. THE ALLOWANCE OF IT EXPLAINED; AND THE ROYAL LICENCE FOR PRINTING IT: JOHN DAY, THE PRINTER OF IT, PATRONIZED BY ARCHBISHOP PARKER AND THE PRIVY COUNCIL.—III. USAGE OF THIS VERSION SANCTIONED BY THE CROWN AND CONVOCATION: ONE OF THE HYMNS IN THIS COMPLETE COLLECTION OF PSALMS, &c. ESTABLISHED BY ACT OF PARLIAMENT.—IV. BELIEF OF PRELATES AND CLERGY IN THE AUTHORIZED USAGE OF THE OLD VERSION: ARCHBISHOP PARKER, BISHOP COX, AND ROBERT WISDOM, WHO WERE NOT FRIENDS TO THE RIGID CALVINISTS OR PURITANS; JOSEPH MEDE, &c.—V. OBSERVATIONS UPON THIS VERSION AT THE SAVOY CONFERENCE UPON ALTERATIONS IN THE LITURGY IN 1661.

I. THE facts which illustrate, *in many respects*, the sanction of authority possessed by our Old Metrical Version of the Psalms, are now to be produced. If the care and curiosity, which are ^a said to have been employed in researches for *any* sanction belonging to it, had not overpassed these facts; the ^b plea for introducing, in our Churches, unau-

^a By Heylin, Collier, &c. See the preceding chapter.

^b See the preceding Chapter.

thorized Psalms or Hymns, might not at any time have been advanced ; nor the conscientious ‘scruples of any persons, on the ground of insufficient authority, to use this Version, have existed. The influence indeed which these elder strains obtained at first, and have since preserved ; and to which *the several Metrical Versions succeeding this of Sternhold and his associates, bearing a royal privilege,* cannot pretend a parallel ; at once bespeak, if there were no other evidences, an *authorized usage*. There certainly have been several Translations of the Psalms in metre *royally privileged*, besides those which we call the Old and New Versions ; as other writers also have noticed, though not so completely, as to defy further illustration. Of such Translations the Bishop of Peterborough has not been pleased to make any mention ; and that there have been such, the Bishop of Killaloe^d appears to question. The pages of our old poetry, in which no man has been more conversant than the latter of these vigilant and learned prelates, had for a moment escaped his lordship’s recollection. To such Versions I shall have occasion to refer in the following pages ; while I endeavour to prove, that from the very beginning of the reign of Elizabeth, (*the period at which connivance is ‘repeatedly stated as its accompaniment,*) the Version of

• See the preceding Chapter, Sect. XIII.

^d Ibid.

• Ibid. Sect. II. V. XII.

Sternhold and others was considered as established Metrical Psalmody ; that it was used as such ; that where necessary, as in a temporary Form of Prayer, a Psalm, selected out of this Version, was prescribed and commanded in such Form ; and that subsequently, from the reign of Elizabeth down to the appearance of the New Version, preference has been constantly given to it by those who have respected the customs of our Church, notwithstanding the several attempts of Versions both unauthorized and privileged, (not excepting that of Tate and Brady,) to usurp its place.

II. The *allowance*, or *approbation*, is the first point to be considered. And if this Version had *not been approved*, can we suppose that such watchful governors of the Church as Parker, at the time, and Whitgift and Bancroft afterwards, Archbishops of Canterbury, in times too which demanded all their vigilance, would have suffered ALLOWED TO BE SUNG IN CHURCHES to remain upon the title of a book *not so allowed*? *Allowed*, at the time of the publication of this Version, was, in respect to works published, the formal expression for *appro-*

' The Reviewer, in the British Critic, of Mr. Tattersall's publication of Merrick's Version of the Psalms, has rightly, though barely, noticed the word *allowed* in the title-page of Sternhold's Version as anciently meaning *approved*. Br. Crit. Jan. 1798, p. 68. The word indeed was familiar in this sense by its occurrence in the Old Prose Version of the Psalms : "The Lord *alloweth* the righteous." Ps. xi. 6. And Shakspeare has very often used *allow* in this meaning of *approve*.

red or *authorized*; and had indeed been so applied to works, intended for publication, long before. Thus, in Archbishop Cranmer's letter to the Secretary of State in 1551, that the printer of his book might obtain the requisite licence to publish it: "Both printing, and selling, of any matters in the English tongue, is prohibited by a Proclamation set furthe; *unless the same matter be first ALLOWED by the King's Majestie, or six of his Privey Counsaile.*" We shall find the same restriction in the reign of Elizabeth; the same necessity of procuring, what the desire of *uniformity in religion* at the time might dictate, *a licence for printing and publishing books.* Now in the year 1559, the Royal Injunctions of Elizabeth were published; of which the fifty-first contains these words: "Because there is a great abuse in the printers of bookes, whereby ariseth great disorder by publication of unfruitfull, vaine, and infamous bookes and papers, the Queene's Majestie straitly chargeth and commaundeth, that no manner of person shall print *any maner of booke or paper, of what sort, nature, or in what language soever it be, except the same be first licenced by her Majestie,* by expresse wordes in writing, or by six of her Privie Councell; or be perused and licenced by the Archbishops of Canterburie and Yorke, the Bishop of London, the Chauncellors of both Universities, the Bishop being Ordinarie, and the Archdeacon also,

* Strype's Life of Abp. Cranmer, Appendix. No. 62.

of the place where any such shall be printed, or by two of them, whereof the Ordinarie of the place to be always one." That the requisite obedience, in the case of Sternhold's Version, was shewn to the Injunction; and that the Version had undergone the necessary examination; seems clear by "a^b Licence granted in the third year of the Queen's reign, (1561,) for John Day to print *the Psalms of David in metre.*" Accordingly he is described as having printed, in 1562, "*The whole Booke of Psalmes, collected into English metre, by T. Sternhold, J. Hopkins, and others, &c.*" It may also be noticed, in passing, that one of those persons, whose metrical labours were brought into this complete collection of English Psalmody, was a royalⁱ commissioner with others to visit the whole realm, and (among other duties) *to deliver the Queen's Injunctions.* This was Dr. Richard Cox, afterwards Bishop of Ely. These Psalms, then, which none appear to have disputed as being, at their first appearance, described as "*set forth and allowed to be sung in Churches,*" exhibited the usual title of *approbation*, which other publications then did; or, as they sometimes exhibited it, with the synonyme *authorized.* Thus: "^k Sermons of John Calvin, &c. Newly set forth and *allowed*, 1560. Printed by John Day, 1561." Again,

^b Ames, Hist. Acc. of Printing, p. 238.

ⁱ Churton's Life of Dean Nowel, p. 42, 43.

^k Ames, ut. sup. p. 238.

“^l A very profitable Treatise, made by M. John Calvyne, &c. Set forth and *authorized* according to the Queene’s Majesties Injunctions. Printed by R. Hall, 1561.” Again, “^m A Summarie of Englyshe Chronicles, &c. Perused and *allowed* according to the Queene’s Majesties Injunctions. Printed by T. Marshe, 1565.” Sometimes also the licence or approbation ran in these words, “ⁿ *Seen and allowed according to the order appointed.*” The form long continued. Thus : “^o An old playe called Winter’s Tale, formerly *allowed of* by Sir George Bucke, and likewyse by mee, [Sir Henry Herbert,] on Mr. Hemmings his worde that there was nothing profane added or reformed, thogh the *allowed booke* was missinge, 19 Aug. 1623.” Thus, of Archbishop Abbot in 1627 : “^p If the King should send the Sermon unto him, and command him to *allow* it to the press, one of these two things would follow, that either he should *authorize* it, &c. or should refuse it.” Again, in answer to the suggestion ; “^q My Lord, you should *allow* this Sermon to the press ;” his Grace replies, “ I was never he that *authorized* books to be printed ; for it is the work of my chaplains to read over other men’s writings, and what is fit, to let it go, what is unfit, to expunge it.” Examples of this kind might be

^l Ames, ut. supr. p. 287. ^m Ibid. p. 299. ⁿ Ibid. p. 322.

^o Prologemena to Johnson’s and Stevens’s Shakspeare, ed. 1803, vol. 3. p. 278.

^p Rushworth’s Historical Collections, 1659, p. 440.

^q Ibid. p. 441.

multiplied a hundred fold. I will only add, that sometimes the *allowance* was printed with the word *approbatio* at the head of it.—Afterwards, in the nineteenth year of the Queen's reign^r, another Licence was granted to John Day and Richard Day his Son, during their Lives, to print the Psalms of David in metre. And accordingly in 1598, this whole Book of Psalms was printed by John Windet for the Assigns of the son who *had been thus joined in the patent with his father*. Licences thus publicly granted, directions thus regularly observed, are surely disclaimers of^s *connivance*, as also of^t *assumption* either on the part of the translators or the printer; and are, on the contrary, *proofs of royal authority* as to the publication of these Psalms, a point of no small moment. And who was this John Day, to whom the Licence for printing the Version was granted? Not indeed the^u royal printer, but a man of learning, who was patronized both by Archbishop Parker and the Privy Council of that period. The excellent primate is described as having “^w had a favour for him, and perhaps a little the more, because, by his being employed in printing the Ecclesiastical Orders and Injunctions from time to time, *he was no ways affected by the Puritan party*.” And the Council of the Queen had “^x written, upon some occasion,

^r Ames, ut. supr. p. 243. ^s See Chap. I.

^u Ibid. ^t Ibid. ^v Ames, ut. supr. p. 233.

^w Ibid. p. 232.

to this prelate, and the other ecclesiastical commissioners, *to help Day ; perhaps in vending his books, and encouraging those of the Clergy to buy them.*" In the year after the whole of the Version had been printed by him, namely in 1563, there appeared sixty-two Psalms of this Translation with the musical accompaniment of " foure parts, whiche may be song to al musicall instrumentes, seth forth for the encrease of vertue, &c." This also he printed *cum gratiâ et privilegio Regiæ Majestatis per septennium*, which favour of the Queen again appears in a like instance ; as in 1579 there is another edition of Psalms, selected from Sternhold, with a similar title and musical notes, and with the royal arms upon the first leaf, together with the important notification *cum privilegio*, printed by him. These particulars deserve mention in speaking of the formal *allowance*, or *approbation*, which has been so often denied as having been possessed by the Version of Sternhold and his associates. John Day likewise printed the British Antiquities, and the Metrical Version of the Psalms, composed by Archbishop Parker ; of which latter publication there will presently be given a further account, illustrating the sanction of authority belonging to the Version of Sternhold : for the Version of Parker appears, though *royally privileged*, not to have been imposed upon any congregation, or recommended, in opposition to Sternhold's, which, we may suppose it might have been, if the primate had

not considered Sternhold's as *the settled form of Metrical Psalmody for the Church.*

III. The usage of the Old Version is sanctioned by the Crown and Convocation. Sir George Wheler, a very learned divine and antiquary, in his interesting *Account of the Churches of the Primitive Christians*, published in 1689, has related that from this Version a Psalm was chosen, and enjoined or directed to be used, in a Form of Prayer, soon after the first Collection of these Psalms was published. “ I do not doubt but there was authority for those [Psalms] in use, *when first set forth.* For not only *that at the front testifies as much, in the oldest editions ; but also there is a Form of Prayer and Thanksgiving, set forth by Queen Elizabeth and her Council, WHEREIN ONE OF THOSE PSALMS [IS] ORDERED TO BE SUNG ; not long after that edition in the same reign, in which they came forth.*” It is next to be observed that, in the old editions of the complete collection of these Psalms, the Hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*, which was translated into English metre, and placed in the Form and Manner of making and consecrating Bishops and Priests in the first Ordinal of Edward the sixth, *to be sung or said, is the first of the Metrical Translations or Hymns*, which

’ *Account of the Churches, &c.* p. 121, 122. Sir G. Wheler was a Prebendary of Durham. He had travelled with the celebrated Spon, and part of his *Travels* has been published. He presented to the University of Oxford several valuable antiquities collected while he travelled.

precede these Psalms: "Come Holy Ghost, Eternal God, proceeding from above:" and is yet, in the same Forms, one of the Hymns so *enjoined*. And this English Hymn was sung after the Litany, in the Cathedral of St. Paul, London, at the second Session of the Convocation in 1562-3, namely on the 13th of January, before Archbishop Parker and other prelates. It is thus recorded in the Acts of that Convocation: "Decantata fuit per ministros ecclesiæ Letania, *in sermone vulgari* (juxta morem et ritum in Libro nuncupato, *The Book of Common Prayers*, &c. descriptum;) quâ finitâ ac Hymno *Veni Creator*, &c. per ministros ejusdem ecclesiæ *in vulgari solemniter decantato*, Magister Wilhelmus Daye, S. T. B. &c. suggestum in medio chori positum ingressus fuit, ac ibidem Concionem Latinam, stilo venusto, ad Patres et Clerum præ-sentes habuit." Then, after this Latin Sermon, the first Psalm in English was sung: "Finitâ verò Concione, ac *Psalmo primo* (*Beatus vir*, &c.) *in sermone vulgari decantato*, celebrata fuit Sacra Communio, &c." It is probable that this was *the first Metrical Psalm in Sternhold's Collection*; to which are prefixed the words *Beatus vir*, from the Latin Vulgate, as they also are to the same Psalm in Archbishop Parker's Metrical Version of the whole number, and as they had long before been to the same in the old Prose Translation which

* Acta in Convoc. 1562, printed in Kennet's *Synodus Anglicana*, p. 194. * Ibid. p. 195.

is now in the Book of Common Prayer. There is no Prose Translation of the Hymn, *Veni Creator*, with which we are acquainted; and as the Metrical Version of that Hymn had already been ^b appointed to be sung in a Public Form of Prayer, the bishops and clergy were therefore now witnessing the performance of what was *expressly enjoined*, and made a part of the liturgical offices *established by*

^b A gentleman, who has thought proper to publish lately a New Metrical Version of the Psalms of David, with an Appendix of Select Psalms and Hymns *adapted to the Service of the United Church of England and Ireland, &c.* upon his own authority, while he thinks that our Church “did not even contemplate the introduction of Metrical Psalms or Hymns into her ordinary services,” [at the Reformation;] admits, however, that “she has in some measure sanctioned them by the introduction of a Metrical Hymn to the Holy Spirit in her Ordination Service.” See this New Metr. Vers. by the Rev. Basil Woodd, M.A. 1821. Pref. p. 2. et seq. This modern translator, then, opposes his opinion, we see, to the belief of Burnet, and Strype, and the Bishop of Killaloe, and others, *that a proviso in the Queen's Injunctions of 1559, was formed in concession to Metrical Psalmody.* Nor is Mr. Woodd correct in stating “the first instance of the introduction of Metrical Psalmody into the public worship of the Church to be in 1562:” It was at least in 1559, if not before that time. See Chap. I. of this work. If Mr. Woodd had confined himself to the publication of Sternhold's collection in 1562, the observation, which I have made, would have been unnecessary. I am also concerned to find, that without giving himself further trouble, or his readers further information, this gentleman tells the thrice-told tale of Heylin's asserting no *allowance* for the use of the Old Version, and the easy assent of Warton to the same mistake.

Act of Parliament. The Metrical Hymn to the Holy Spirit, then, being sung at one part of the Service, when the Convocation assembled; it is fair to presume that the Psalm, sung at another part of it, namely, *after the Sermon*, was also Metrical. The Psalms of Sternhold are described as set forth and allowed, (it will be remembered,) “to be sung in all Churches before and after Morning and Evening prayer, as also *before and after Sermons*.” Heylin forgets not this assertion upon the title-page of these Psalms, and says, “This may serve to explain to us what the ordinary times of singing together these Psalms were; namely, before they began the morning Service, and after it was done; likewise, when there was a sermon, *before it began, and after it was finished*.” The Historian might have cited the apparent conformity to the assertion in what has now been stated. He might also have noticed what Dr. Boys, who became dean of Canterbury, had asserted in the early part of James the first’s reign: “^c Let not any wonder at our often Psalmodie *both after, and before, the word expounded and read; and sometime interlaced betweene both*; a custom continued in all other Reformed Churches of Scotland, France, Flanders, &c.”

IV. That belief of Sternhold’s Version being the settled form of Metrical Psalmody for the Church of

^c An Exposition of all the Principall Scriptures used in our English Liturgie, by J. Boys, D.D. 1610. p. 13.

England, which seems to have influenced the mind of Archbishop Parker, to which I have alluded in a preceding section, was long afterwards expressed by another prelate; than whom a more profound antiquary or scholar, the Church of England can hardly, at any period, boast. This was Bishop Prideaux; who in a valuable little work, addressed to his daughters, entitled, *Euchologia, or the Doctrine of practical Praying*, 1656, thus speaks of these Psalms: “^d But concerning the divers uses and applications of the Psalms in private, that notable treatise of an ancient Father, placed before *our Psalms in Metre*, may be a profitable directory; wherein ninety-nine cases are set down, what Psalms we may distinctly use for our greatest comfort.” This is the treatise of Athanasius the great, as it is styled, concerning the use and virtue of the Psalms; prefixed to *old editions of Sternhold and Hopkins*, but injudiciously excluded from the modern; and found in the Version also of Archbishop Parker without the variation of a word. But it will be said, that *singing of Psalms in metre is no part of the Liturgy*; which was the answer returned by the Episcopal to the Presbyterian Commissioners at the Savoy conference. Admitted. Some of the Reformers observed, that “^e *singing*, howsoever it be an ancient institution, nevertheless was never universal, and of necessity thrust upon the churches; but *it was free*;

^d *Euchologia*, &c. pp. 154, 155.

^e Bullinger, *Sermons Transl.* p. 934. col. 1.

neither was it always used in all churches." In this spirit the proviso, which seems to be in favour of our Metrical Psalmody, was penned: " ' For the comforting of such as delight in musick, *it may be permitted*, that in the beginning, or in the end of Common Prayer, either at morning or evening, there *may be sung* an hymn, or such like song." Our Reformers *chose the singing of Metrical Psalms*; and, having made this choice, they next agreed upon one complete collection to be used. Yet Fuller, the historian, has quaintly said, that " ^s *the child was disliked for the mother's sake*; the translators in Sternhold's collection, though branched hither, having *had their root in Geneva*." It is true, some of these translators were rigid Calvinists. Yet who can say that any of these Psalms will subject those, who use them, to be called Calvinists or Puritans? Or what danger is there in them to a Church not Calvinistical? To this collection Bishop Cox, one of our ablest divines of the time, and ^h no

^f See Chap. I. of this work.

^s Church Hist. Cent. xvi.

^h Cox was one of our Clergy, who, when Mary ascended the throne, fled to Frankfort in Germany. And there, as Wood has observed, he shewed himself zealous for the Common Prayer, as used in the days of Edward the Sixth, against the noted Calvinist John Knox, and his party, Ath. Ox. Vol. I. p. 161. See the Brief Discourse of the Troubles at Frankfort, Edit. 1575. pp. 38, 39. Re-printed in the Phenix, Vol. II. p. 44. *et seq.* Bancroft, when Bishop of London, published his *Dangerous Positions* of the Geneva Reformers; and in Book II. Ch. i. he says, " It is very material to be observed, that *the*

friend to these Puritans or Calvinists, gave his approbation, in allowing a metrical composition of his own to form a part of it. To this collection, Robert Wisdom, the colleague of Cox, inⁱ opposition to

rest of the learned men that fled in Queen Mary's time, as John Scorie, W. Barlow, *Richard Cox*, T. Becon, J. Bale, J. Parkhurst, E. Grindall, E. Sandys, A. Nowell, *Robert Wisdome*, J. Jewell, and very many more, *having no great affection to Geneva*, maintained the Reformation of the Church of England in King Edward's time; and used, in their holy assemblies, the form of service, and order of ceremonies, which were then established." *Cox* was also one of those who formed the Liturgy in Edward's reign, and who reviewed it in the reign of Elizabeth. Is it probable that this distinguished Prelate would have suffered his composition, which is found in Sternhold's collection to have been admitted, or to have remained, in a work announcing, that the collection was *allowed to be sung in Churches*, if it really had not been so? The metrical composition of this learned person is THE LORD'S PRAYER, which Warton however has given to *Whittingham*.

ⁱ See what Bishop Bancroft says of *R. Wisdom* in the preceding note. Strype, in his *Life of Archbishop Cranmer*, B. II. Ch. 28. relating the circumstance of his being one of those whom that Primate had in view, as worthy to fill the see of Armagh, adds, that when the Geneva faction at Frankfort separated from the rest, "*Wisdom* did, in a Sermon vindicate the English Book, [meaning the Common Prayer,] and somewhat sharply blamed them that went away, calling them *mad-heads*." Strype also gives a high character of his zeal as a preacher, and of his labours as an author. "Besides other books," he says, "*Wisdom* penned a very godly and fruitful exposition upon certain Psalms of David; of the which he translated some into English metre. There is one of them, and I think no more, still remaining in our ordinary singing Psalms; namely, the hundred twenty-fifth; which in the title is said to

the Geneva faction, and a Divine who had been so distinguished by Cranmer, as to be one of four proposed by him for the Archbishopric of Armagh, contributed one of the Psalms, and another metrical composition. To this collection Archbishop Parker, who strictly required conformity to the national religion, and lent no aid to Puritanism, yielded his assent, in taking no measures to introduce his own Version into the Church, which he had formed with great care, and with a view to public usage, as we shall presently see: and either he had copied from this collection a whole treatise, without any alteration, and a hymn with very little; or he had permitted both to be copied from his own publication: so friendly was this primate to Metrical Psalmody. To this collection the learned Joseph Mede appears to

be composed by R. IV. There is also a Hymn of his preserved, and set usually at the end of our English singing Psalms, in our Bibles, beginning, PRESERVE US, LORD, BY THY DEAR WORD." He appears to have had the credit, indeed, of forming *the whole collection*, which is called that of Sternhold, Hopkins, and others. Overbury, in his *Characters*, of which the twelfth edition was published in 1627, describing The Precisian, says, "He had rather hear one of *Robert Wisdome's Psalms*, than the best Hymn a Cherubim can sing." To him, however, more than to any of the other translators, it must be confessed that the exceptions, noticed by Fuller the Church Historian, against *the baldness of the translation*, strongly apply. Hence he is sometimes mentioned by our old poets not without reflection upon his very homely rhymes. Butler, speaking of the wretched Metrical Translation of the Psalms made by Francis Rouse the Calvinistical provost of Eton in 1641, at the desire of Parliament, to supersede (though the effort was

refer in his *Set Form of Prayer asserted*: “^k We ourselves, and all the Reformed Churches, use to sing the same Psalms, not only as set forms, but set in metre, that is, after a human composure.” To this collection, another Divine, in a *Vindication of the Forme of Common Prayers used in the Church of England*, expressly calls attention: “^l If our singing Psalms shall passe in the Church, in reverence to antiquitie; though *Tho. Sternhold* and *John Hopkins*, some honest gentlemen, made them, when *King James* and *Sandys* lye by; shall not our Service-Book be much more honoured, that comes from the fathers of the Church, whose persons and endowments were farre more illustrious?” Here we find at once the acknowledged usage of Sternhold’s collection, in reverence to antiquity or custom, and neither superseded by the privileged Version of a monarch, nor by the elegant, and also privileged Version of a true poet. But of these Versions of *Sandys*, and *King James*, I will speak more fully in the next chapter. The present I will close, with

in vain) that of Sternhold, &c. pleasantly says: “When Rouse stood forth for his trial, *Robin Wisdom* was found the better poet.” Remains, edit. Thyer, 1754. p. 230. He was honoured, we see, by the notice of Cranmer, by whom also he was preferred to the Rectory of *Stisted* in Essex; and he was afterwards Rector of *Settrington* in Yorkshire. His colleague, Bishop Cox, made him also his Archdeacon of *Ely*.

^k Mede’s Discourses on various Texts of Scripture, 1642. p. 8.

^l Vindic, &c, by Dr. Whitby, M.A. Oxford, 1644. p. 28.

extracts from the Savoy Conference upon the Liturgy in 1661, in further illustration of the *authorized usage*, considered as belonging to the Old Version:

V. And now I point out to the reader, among the exceptions of the Presbyterians, delivered at the Savoy Conference, against the Book of Common Prayer, the twelfth of them: “^m Because singing of Psalms is a considerable part of public worship, we desire that the Version, *set forth and allowed to be sung in Churches*, may be amended; or *that we may have leave to make use of a purer Version.*” They ask leave, we see, *to use another Version*; plainly implying, that they considered the Version of Sternhold and Hopkins authorized, and that they presumed not, or affected not, to depart from it *without leave*. They again advert to *the authority of the Old Version*. “ⁿ Your distinction between Hopkins’s and David’s Psalms, as if the metre, *allowed by authority*, to be sung in Churches, made them to be no more David’s Psalms, seemeth to us a very hard saying.” The Episcopal Commissioners did not think fit to attend to the remarks of the Presbyterians on this point, as they rightly considered the Old Version as forming no constituent part, (though it formed an accustomed part,) of the Book of Common Prayer; and therefore

^m An Account of all the Proceedings of the Commissioners of both persuasions, &c. Lond. 1661. p. 6.

ⁿ Ibid. The Papers that passed between the Commissioners, &c. p. 31.

" ° *no part of the Commission.*" Yet at the same time they did not deny the authorized usage of this Version, nor did they concede that it might be changed at the discretion or wish of any who disliked it.

° The Papers that passed between the Commissioners, &c.
p. 58.

CHAPTER III.

I. OF METRICAL VERSIONS OF THE PSALMS, ROYALLY PRIVILEGED; AND FIRST OF ARCHBISHOP PARKER'S.—II. OF HENRY DOD'S VERSION.—III. OF GEORGE WITHER'S VERSION.—IV. OF KING JAMES THE FIRST'S VERSION.—V. OF GEORGE SANDYS' VERSION.—VI. OF WILLIAM BARTON'S VERSION.—VII. OF TATE AND BRADY'S VERSION.—VIII. OF SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE'S VERSION.

I. I have said, that there are several Metrical Versions of the Psalms in our language, which have been published with the accompaniment of *royal privilege*, or with *allowance to be used in Churches*, besides what we call *the Old and New Versions*. Of these the first, and the most curious, and of which a complete account has hitherto been wanting, is the Version made by Dr. ^a PARKER, before he

^a Strype, in his Life of Archbishop Parker, barely speaks of this Version: Sir John Hawkins, in his History of Music, Warton in his History of English Poetry; Dr. Lort, in his remarks upon what is said of Parker's Version in that History, Gent. Mag. Vol. li. p. 566; and Ritson, in his Bibliographia Poetica; may be also mentioned as having, in several, though not all respects, described this metrical Translation.

was advanced to the Primacy of all England, and published after that period. Some have doubted that this Version was ^b *at any time published*, and have considered it as a work printed only for private distribution. If this had been the case, there would hardly have been a notification, upon the title of it, of a *royal privilege, which was to be enjoyed FOR THE SPACE OF TEN YEARS*: But the title makes this notification: “The whole Psalter translated into English metre, which containeth an hundred and fifty Psalms. Imprinted at London, by John Daye. *Cum gratiâ et Privilegio Regiæ Majestatis per decennium.*” There is no date of the year in which the book was printed. But it is conjectured^c to have been composed in 1557, and to have been published about 1560. The copy of this performance, which Sir Mark Masterman Sykes possesses, and was once the property of the learned and indefatigable collector of books, Mr. Bindley, bears upon the colophon the date of 1557, written in studied imitation of printed figures. But it could not have *then been published*: for would the bigot

^b Warton and Dr. Farmer were of opinion that the book was never *published by sale*; for which opinion the antiquary Ritson thought they had no authority. Dr. Burney, in his History of Music, says, that it was *printed*, but never *published*. Perhaps these assertions, or opinions, were formed in consequence of the diligent Strype, and the learned Tanner, having not been able, after much enquiry, to gain a sight of this volume.

^c By Warton, Hist. of English Poetry.

Mary have granted her royal licence to so distinguished a Protestant as Parker? Indeed Parker was then in ^d concealment from the fury of this queen. The work is ^e not so very scarce as some have asserted. Kennet says, that the Archbishop declined publishing it ^f with his name, but suffered his wife to present the work to several of the nobility. The copy, now in Lambeth Library, exhibits, on the back of the title, such a presentation, viz. “*To the right vertuouse and honorable Ladye, the Countesse of Shrewsburys, from your lovinge*

^a In the second year of Mary's reign, he was deprived of all his preferments, and then retired into Norfolk among his friends; where, by shifting from place to place, but still keeping himself within the kingdom, he escaped, though often and diligently sought for, the evil meditated against him. See Le Neve's *Lives of all the Protestant Bishops of the Church of England*, p. 8.

^e “About 1560, was printed a Metrical Version of the whole Psalter, made, as it is believed, by Archbishop Parker, although it does not bear his name. On account of *the extreme rarity* of copies of this book, it has been generally maintained that the Archbishop intended it for private circulation *only*; it is however to be seen in *the Bodleian library*, and in *the library of Brasen Nose College, Oxford*.” Dr. Cotton, in the *Christian Remembrancer*, June 1821, p. 328. To this information I can add, that it is to be seen in *the library of Lambeth Palace*; in *the library of the Church of Canterbury*; in *the library of Sir Mark Masterman Sykes*; in *the library of the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville*; and that Dr. Farmer was possessed of a copy. It is probable that in several old libraries, it may be found, either bound up with other publications, or separate.

^f See Ritson's *Bibliograph. Poet.* p. 292; who cites the account which Kennet gives from Sir John Hawkin's *History of Music*.

friende, MARGARET PARKER." The copy also, in the library, belonging to the Cathedral of Canterbury, which presents a specimen of very curious ancient binding, was probably her gift. Other copies are ^s said to be extant of the same donation. The Primate, it is clear, did not avail himself of any influence, or measures, to recommend his own translation to public notice, by opposing it to the collection of Sternhold and his associates. On the contrary, he ^h patronized the printer of that collection. Perhaps the Archbishop had agreed with others as to the fitness of a collection supplied by many, rather than the production of an individual, for the Service of the Church. Yet that for the Service of the Church his Version appears to have been formed, is probable from the apparatus with which it is accompanied, and from the direction to the reader which preceeds it. This direction, upon the first leaf, thus ⁱ speaks, and thus is pointed:

“ Of thee good friend : thus much I crave,
 These few requests I say :
 No brows to bend : but first withsave,
 To judge by like assay.

And if ye spy : as much ye may,
 Where stray'd amiss I have :
 To mend where I : went out of way,
 With art more sad and grave.

^s Ritson's Bibliograph. Poet. p. 292.

^h See Chap. II.

ⁱ I have used modern orthography in this and other citations for the convenience of every reader

But read it round: and hack it not,
 As jumbling short with long:
 Express them sound: and rack them not,
 As learners use among.

Accent in place: your voice as need'th,
 Note number, point, and time:
 Both life and grace: good reading breed'th,
 Flat verse it rais'th sublime.

Observe the train: the cesure mark,
 To rest with note in close:
 Rhythm dogrel plain: as dogs do bark,
 Ye make it els to lose.

Read oft enough: well spell the line,
 Less jar to hear by use:
 If verse be rough: no fault is mine,
 If ye the ear abuse.

But principal thing: your lute to tune,
 That heart may sing in chord:
 Your voice and string: so fine to prune,
 To love and serve the Lord.

Then follow five metrical stanzas, formed from passages in St. Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, in the Epistle of St. James, in the Psalms, and in Ecclesiasticus. To these succeeds a poem, in similar metre, occupying eleven pages upon *the vertue of Psalmes*; in the sixth stanza of which is an allusion to the exiles from England, in the reign of Mary, and to the resource which they found in Psalmody:

If wrung thou beest: by tyranny,
 And banisht out of land:
 Thou mayst relieve: thy misery,
Content by Psalmes to stand.

And in the 32d. 34th. and 39th stanzas, the taste for *Metrical* Psalmody, at the Reformation, is displayed and vindicated :

The Psalms, saith he ; *in verse be told,*
And tuned hy music sweet :
The ear to please : of young and old,
So David thought it meet.

For that that is ; commended both,
With tune and time aright :
It sink'th more sweet ; and deeper go'th,
In heart of man's delight.

And what is verse : but rhythm to name,
In Latin, French, or Greek :
Our *English verse* : I count the same,
Though all men it not * leke.

In the 51st and 52d stanzas he gives the reason of his publication :

Herein because : all men's delight,
Bene diverse found in mind :
I turn'd the Psalms : all whole in sight,
In rhythms of divers kind.

And where at first : I secret meant,
But them my selfe to sing :
Yet friends requests : made me relent,
Thus them abroad to bring.

And towards the conclusion he says :

* For *like*.

† The old present tense plural for *be*.

Us song should move : as sprite thereby,
 Might tunes in concord sing :
 God grant these Psalms : might edifie,
 That is the chiefest thing.

He therefore had once intended these Psalms for public use. After this poem follows *Athanasius in Psalmos*, in English ; next, *Of the Use and virtue of the Psalmes by Athanasius*, which treatise occurs, word for word, as I have before said, in the old editions of Sternhold and Hopkins, and is a most remarkable circumstance ; then *Psalmi quodammodo sic constituti*, &c. *Basilus in Psalmos* ; *Chrysostomus in Psalmos* ; extracts from *Josephus*, *Eusebius*, *Jerom*, and *Basil* again ; and from *St. Ambrose*, *That the whole multitude of the Church sang their Psalms together* ; and lastly, from *Nicephorus*, *Bernard*, and the *Earl of Surry's Ecclesiastes*. The Psalms in metre then begin ; to each of which is prefixed an argument in verse, and a Collect is subjoined in prose. The Collects bear some allusion to the subject of each Psalm. The first may be cited as an example. “ O Blessed Father, make us to be as fruitful trees before thy presence, so watered by the dew of Thy grace, that we may glorify Thee, by the plenteousness of sweet fruit in our daily conversation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” After the Psalms follow *Gloria Patri* for divers metres, *Te Deum* in English metre ; *The Song of the Three Children*, the *Benedictus*, and *Magnificat*, *Nunc Dimittis*, *Grace before and after Meat*, and the *Athanasian Creed*, in the

same; concluding with the Hymn to the Holy Spirit, *Veni Creator*, which is nearly in the same words as the Metrical Version of this Hymn in Sternhold's collection; another remarkable circumstance in the history of our Psalmody, to which I have^m before referred the reader's attention. I will cite the first four stanzas from each translation, in proof of what I say.

ARCHBISHOP PARKER'S VERSION.

Come, Holy Ghost: Eternal God,
Which dost from God proceed:
The Father first: and eke the Son,
One God as we do read.

Oh visit Thou: our minds and hearts,
Thy heavenly grace inspire:
That we in truth: and godliness,
May set our whole desire.

Thou art, O Sprite: the Comforter,
In woe and hard distress:
The heavenly gift: of God so high,
Which tongue cannot express.

Thou fountain art: and lively spring,
Of joy celestial:
The fire so bright: the love so clear,
And unction spiritual.

THE VERSION IN THE COLLECTION OF STERNHOLD, &c.

Come, Holy Ghost, Eternal God,
Proceeding from above:
Both from the Father and the Son,
The God of peace and love.

^m In Chap. II.

Visit our minds, and into us
 Thy heavenly grace inspire :
 That in all truth and godliness,
 We may have true desire.

Thou art the very Comforter,
 In all woe and distress :
 The heavenly gift of God Most High,
 Which no tongue can express.

The fountain, and the lively spring,
 Of joy celestial:
 The fire so bright, the love so clear,
 And unction spiritual.

Upon the whole, the latter Version of this Hymn is throughout the best. Nor indeed is the Prelate at any time a formidable rival to Sternhold and his company. I must add, that the volume closes with eight musical tunes for Psalms, in four parts. From so curious a work in various metres, as the author himself has told us, a specimen or two shall be cited ; the first of which exhibits a metre, with a close to each stanza, similar to what the minor poets of modern times have been fond of forming ; and the second presents the usage of the anapæstic measure in our poetry at that early period ; a measure, however, not suited, I think, to the dignity of Psalmody. The first is from Ps. xxxiii. p. 76.

Rejoice in God : the Lord he is,
 Ye rightwise men, and do not miss ;
 The just be bound to thank, iwis :

Repeat ye this !

Praise ye the Lord : with melodies,
 With harp and lute, with symphonies ;
 Sing Psalms to him in psalteries :

Forget not this !

Sing carols new with jubilee
 To God the Lord in majesty ;
 His lauds, his praise, sing heartily :

Well use ye this !

His word is true most certainly,
 His works be wrought most faithfully :
 Hold this in heart most constantly :

Abuse not this !

The second is from Ps. xxxvi. p. 99.

The words of his mouth : be unrightfully weigh'd,
 In sleighty deceit : be they craftily lay'd :
 Quite ceased he hath : to behave him aright ;
 Good deed for to do : hath he driv'n from his sight.
 All mischief he dreams : to devise in his bed,
 From godly deserts : hath he turned his head, &c.

Such are the metrical efforts of a translator of the Psalms, the contemporary of Sternhold and his assistants ; which, notwithstanding the rank and influence of their author, appear not to have obtained any public usage in Churches, but rather to have shrunk from the exercise of the privilege conceded to them in yielding to the Version, then adopted, of Sternhold, Hopkins, and others. In a quarto edition of the translation of the Bible in 1569, which had been just before made and published by the direction of this great prelate, we are informed, indeed, that *theⁿ Psalms in metre,*

ⁿ Lewis's Hist. of the English Translations of the Bible, 2d. edit. p. 256.

printed by John Day, in the same year, follow the New Testament. These are the Psalms of Sternhold, &c. And if they had not been allowed, as the title of them has expressed it, would the Archbishop of Canterbury have suffered such an appendage to his Bible? The inference is plain. To the admissibility of the Metrical Version there was no objection, and the value of it the primate had no wish to dispute.

II. The Metrical Version of HENRY DOD is the next, in chronological order, of those which have been distinguished by *royal privilege*. No licence, or imprimatur, or privilege, beyond his own declaration, appears in the copy of it which I have seen. But that declaration is as follows. “To the Christian Reader Grace, Mercy, and Peace. May it please thee, good reader, to understand, that I having translated nine of the singing Psalms, which were of the most difficult tunes, into easy metre fitting our common tunes, for use in mine own family, anno 1603; some godly learned friends desired them for common good. So I committed the same to the King’s Printer, then being, to be printed. And *it pleased our dread Sovereign to privilege the same*; which impression was all soon spent, and to my knowledge with good acceptance of all. And whereas it hath pleased our said Sovereign Lord the King to vouchsafe unto us so good a reformation of all the Psalms reformed in prose, very many well disposed persons have greatly desired to have the said Book of Psalms reformed in

metre also ; the rather, for that so many of the people are so unskillful in those tunes of the Psalms, wherein is any difficulty, that their Pastors are enforced to omit the Psalms of such tunes ; which is a grievance unto them. Whereupon sundry godly preachers in the Country agreed together to procure the reformation of all ; and to move him thereunto, that had formerly translated the said nine Psalms *privileged by the king*. So one of the said divines came to me with instant request from the rest, and in their names, that I would do the work." The title of this Version, exhibiting no name of place where printed, or of the printer, is "All the Psalms of David, with certain Songs and Canticles of Moses, Deborah, Isaiah, Hezekiah, and others, not formerly extant for Song ; and many of the said Psalms daily omitted, and not sung at all, because of their difficult tunes. Now faithfully reduced into easy metre, fitting our common tunes. Printed, 1620." It is dedicated to his friend Mr. John Brewer, his brother Mr. John Dod, and his nephew of the same name ; all gentlemen of Cheshire. No reader of taste and feeling would be surprised at the statement, made by George Wither, a contemporary translator of the Psalms into Verse, respecting *this privileged Version*, if he were to examine the several Psalms throughout, from which I have selected two ; nor will such readers consider Dod in any other light than as very inferior to Sternhold, or even any of his associates. The statement of Wither is this :

“ ° Dod the silkman's late *ridiculous translation of the Psalms* was, by authority, worthily condemned to the fire.” The two Psalms, which I have selected, have often, by their original turn and imagery, drawn from other old translators very attractive strains of English poesy. From the translator before us we gather only an abundance of rude rhymes and inelegant expressions; and are therefore led to smile at the vanity displayed in the detail of these metrical labours, and to pity the judgment which at any time could countenance them. The first is from Ps. xxiii. p. 40.

The Lord my gracious shepherd is,
 So nothing want shall I.
 In pastures green he makes me rest,
 By th' sweet streams leading me.
 He doth restore my wearied soul;
 He safely leadeth me
 In pleasant paths of righteousness,
 For his name sake only.

The second is from Ps. cxxxvii. p. 285.

By Babel's rivers we sate down,
 Weeping, yea grievously,
 When we remember'd mount Zion.
 Our harps then hanged we
 On willow trees in midst thereof:
 For there required they
 A song of us, who had us first
 As captives led away.

° In the Scholler's Purgatory, published about the year 1625; cited in the Inquiry into Metrical Psalmody by Mr. Gray of York, p. 77.

And they that had us laid on heaps
 Required our melody;
 Saying, One of your Zion's songs
 Unto us now sing ye!

Such a Version, even by Sternhold's bitterest enemies, would not be put in competition with the Old Version. Wither, we see, says it was suppressed *by authority*. Certain it is, that from the date of Dod's first Version in 1603 to the year 1625, about which latter time the work of Wither, recording the suppression, was published, there were at least *twenty-four* editions of Sternhold, &c. presented to the public; beginning with that of 1604, printed for the Company of Stationers, which seems to be the first edition of Sternhold printed for *that Company*.

III. The next *privileged Version* is that of GEORGE WITHER^p; who in 1623 published the

^p This translator had published, in 1620, "Exercises upon the First Psalme both in prose and verse;" a work now little known, and deserving attention only as it may serve to shew the unjustifiable liberty which Wither assumed in these *Exercises*. I cite the first stanza, and the defence of *his exercise* in respect to it:

"The man is blest who walketh not astray
 In their *lewd* counsels that ungodly are;
 Who neither standeth in the sinner's way,
 Nor with the scornful sitteth in their chaire.

"The epithet (*lewd*) is not added in the original, nor other which I some time use in my *Metrical Translation of the Psalms*: neverthelesse, I think I may, with a good conscience, insert them, where they are either such as are warrantable in some other places of Holy Scripture to be well used in that sense; or such as may be *naturally proper to the subject, which they are applyed unto*; as I think this is."

work, entitled "Hymns and Songs of the Church," authorized by the licence of King James I. The instrument, after reciting that the said book is "a^a esteemed worthy and profitable to be inserted in convenient manner, and due place, into every English Psalm-Book in metre," grants *full and free licence to imprint the said book*, and indeed commands that no other English Psalm-Book in metre be uttered, or sold, unless these Hymns be coupled with it. Wither was also empowered by the licence to seize any metrical collection of Psalmody, which was found to be not in unison with the royal mandate. These Psalms and Hymns were fitted with tunes by the celebrated musician of that period, Orlando Gibbons. But neither the licence of his Majesty, nor the strains either of the musical or the poetical composer, were of sufficient efficacy to overthrow the established Version of Sternhold. The Company of Stationers gave no encouragement to the sale of these Hymns. They paid no attention indeed to the exclusive licence, as it were, with which the Hymns were fenced. For from the year 1623 to 1630, both inclusive, *not less than twelve editions of Sternhold were printed for this Company*, and two at least in the University of Cambridge. Of these spiritual songs some were of a character as amatory, as many of those in modern times, to which the ear only of the fanatic

^a Cited by Mr. Gray in his Enquiry into Metrical Psalmody, &c. p. 41.

or the enthusiast is open. Yet Wither had the vanity to persuade himself that his Songs and Hymns might “^r become a means both of increasing knowledge, and *Christian conformity*, within his Majesty’s dominions;” and that “the king foresaw this,” in granting the licence with its arbitrary injunctions already noticed. Afterwards these Hymns and Songs were subjoined to his Version of the Psalms, in 1632; but this new Version was equally unsuccessful in restraining the Company of Stationers from circulating, and of course the public from receiving, the Version of Sternhold, &c. For in that very year two editions of Sternhold were printed for the same proprietors; and in the following year as many. It was in vain, that Wither railed against “^s the meanness” of the Old Translation, and sneered at those (for such there were) “^t of no mean degree, who were very violent for the maintenance and continuance of it.” In vain did he urge, “^u that these Metrical Psalms were *never* commanded to be used in divine service, or in our public congregations;” and that, “whatsoever the Stationers in *their title-page* pretended to that purpose, the Psalms of Sternhold, &c. being first allowed for private devotion only, crept into public use by toleration rather than command.” The Stationers are here unjustly charged as if they had

^r Cited by Mr. Gray in his Inquiry into Metrical Psalmody, &c. p. 78. ^s Ibid. p. 77. ^t Ibid. p. 77.

^u Ibid. p. 77.

affixed upon the title of Sternhold *allowed to be sung in Churches*; when, in truth, those words had been so affixed, many years before a single copy of these Psalms was printed *for them*. But if he could not put to shame these Stationers by words, Wither fancied that by virtue of his *royal privilege* he might not fail to silence their opposition. In vain: the following extract from a letter to Sir Thomas Puckering, dated Jan. 23, 1633, shews the public feeling expressed by men in the highest authority (the Privy Council) in regard to the Old Version; which they admitted to be the usage of the Church, and refused to discountenance, by any sanction or redress of the complaint made by Wither. “* Upon Friday last, Wither convented before the [Privy Council] Board *all or most of the Stationers of London*. The matter is this. Mr. Wither hath, to please himself, *translated our singing Psalms* into another verse; which *he counts better than those the Church hath so long used*; and therefore he hath been at the charge to procure a patent from his Majesty under the broad seal, that his translation shall be printed and bound to all Bibles that are sold. The Stationers refusing to bind them and to sell them with the Bible, (the truth is, nobody would buy the Bible *with such a clog at the end of it*,) and because

* Cited by Mr. Gray in his *Inquiry into Metrical Psalmody*, &c. p. 79. The above extract is copied from a letter, preserved in the British Museum, of E. R. to Sir Thos. Puckering.

some of them stood upon their guard, and would not suffer Mr. Wither and his officers to come into their shops and seize upon such Bibles as wanted his additions, therefore he complained of them for a contempt of the Great Seal. After their Lordships had heard the business *pro* and *con* at length, their Lordships thought good *to damn his patent in part*; that is, *that the translation should not longer be sold with the Bible, but only by itself*; and for my part, I think their Lordships have done very well in ordering it in this manner." The Psalms of Wither, licensed by King Charles I. with the arbitrary injunction similar to that which King James had granted to the Poet's Hymns, bore the following title. "The Psalms of David translated into Lyrick Verse, according to the scope of the Original. By George Wither. Imprinted in the Netherlands by Cornelius Gerrits van Breughel, 1632." 12mo. From these I will select portions of the same Psalms, as those which I have exhibited in the Version of Dod, the fate of which Wither has recorded. The first is of less poetical value than the second, which presents an elegant, though not common, measure of verse.

Ps. xxiii. p. 41.

The Lord my pastor deigns to be;
 I nothing now shall need:
 To drink sweet springs he bringeth me,
 And on green meads to feed.

For his Name sake my heart he glads ;
 He makes my ways upright ;
 And I the vale of death's black shades
 Can pass without affright.

PSALM cxxxvii. p. 272.

As nigh Babel streams we sate,
 Full of griefs, and unbefriended,
 Minding Sion's poor estate ;
 From our eyes the tears descended,
 And our harps we hanged by
 On the willows growing nigh.

For, insulting on our woe,
 They, that us had there enthrall'd,
 Their imperious power to shew,
 For a song of Sion call'd :
 Come, ye captives, come, said they :
 Sing us now an Hebrew lay.

IV. The Version of KING JAMES THE FIRST, published after his decease, with the *royal privilege* of his son King Charles the First, appeared nearly at the same time with that of Wither ; at least there was an edition of it printed at Oxford in 1631. From this edition of these Psalms *cum Privilegio Regiæ Majestatis*, the following licence prefixed to it is taken. “ CHARLES R. Haveing caused this translation of the Psalmes, whereof our late deare father was author, to be perused; and it being found to be exactly and truely done, we do hereby authorize the same to be imprinted according to the patent graunted thereupon, and do allow them

✓ It is engraved on the page facing the title. Many parts of this Version have been unwarrantably altered, like that of Sternhold also, in later times.

to be song in all the Churches of oure dominions, recommending them to all oure goode subjects for that effect." The recommendation, however, appears not to have been much regarded in England. They who had taken it up, Bishop Beveridge has truly said, *were soon forced to lay it down again;* the Old Version still keeping its place in our Churches. To the Scottish Common Prayer Book, indeed, this royal Version was for a time usually subjoined. But it was not altogether acceptable to the Scotch; who, not many years after this had been published, desired nothing more zealously, as we shall presently see, than a new Metrical Translation of the Psalms. The Version of James is rarely superior to that of Sternhold. Specimens of it, in extracts from the same Psalms which I have selected in the two preceding Translations, may here be given.

PSALM xxiii.

The Lord of all my shepherd is;
 I shall from want be free:
 He makes me in green pastures lie,
 And near calm streams to be.

He doth restore my weary soul,
 That it new strength may take,
 And in the paths of righteousness;
 Me leads for His Name's sake.

Yea though I through death's shadow walk,
 Yet fear I in no sort;
 Thou art with me: Thy rod and staff
 With comfort me support.

PSALM cxxxvii.

Of Babylon the rivers by
 We sadly did sit down :
 Yea, when dear Sion came to mind,
 Straight tears our cheeks did drown.

We did hang up our silent harps,
 Though once a comfort chief,
 Where shadowy willows, darkening earth,
 Did seem to flatter grief.

For they, that captives carried us,
 Did us to sing desire ;
 And our destroyers they a song
 Of Sion did require.

V. The Version or Paraphrase of the Psalms, made by the accomplished scholar and elegant poet GEORGE SANDYS, is the next object of notice, as to the point of *royal privilege*. Though many have shewn their good taste in reprinting, from this treasury, very delightful strains of devotion ; I recollect not one who refers to the circumstance of this work, in its first edition, appearing *Cum Privilegio Regiæ Majestatis*. Yet so it is in this “ Paraphrase upon the Psalms of David,” printed at London in 1636 ; to which are prefixed two poetical dedications to the King and Queen, different from those which are found in the edition of the Paraphrase in 1648 ; in which year many of these Psalms were also published with music, composed by Henry and William Lawes, and dedicated to the King. Yet this production is not, like the Old Version, almost literal ; but it is paraphrastic, and perhaps too poetical for the comprehension of

common Congregations, *into which it has therefore never found its way.* It is indeed a most extraordinary production, combining strength and sweetness of versification; and in the mind, able to appreciate its excellence, can never fail to animate devotion. An extract or two may gratify many readers.

PSALM xci. p. 151. edit. 1636.

Who makes the Almighty his retreat,
Shall rest beneath His shady wings,
Free from the oppression of the great,
The rage of war, or wrath of kings.
Free from the cunning fowler's train,
The tainted air's infectious breath :
His truth in perils shall sustain;
And shield thee from the stroke of death.

No terrors shall thy sleeps affright ;
Nor deadly flying arrows slay ;
Nor pestilence devour by night,
Or slaughter massacre by day.

A thousand and ten thousand shall
Sink on thy right hand and thy left :
Yet thou secure shalt see their fall,
By vengeance of their lives bereft.

Since God thou hast thy refuge made,
And dost to Him thy vows direct ;
No evil shall thy strength invade,
Nor wasting plagues thy roof infect.

PSALM cxxxix. p. 221.

'Thou know'st me, O Thou only Wise ;
Seest when I sit, and when I rise ;
Can'st my concealed thoughts disclose ;
Observ'st my labours and repose ;

Know'st all my counsels, all my deeds,
 Each word which from my tongue proceeds :
 Behind, before, by thee enclos'd,
 Thy hand on every part impos'd.
 Such knowledge my capacity
 Transcends ; so wonderful, so high !
 O, which way shall I take my flight,
 Or where conceal me from Thy sight ?
 Ascend I heaven ? heaven is thy Throne :
 Dive I to hell ? there Thou art known.
 Should I the morning's wings obtain,
 And fly beyond the Hesperian main ;
 Thy powerful arm would reach me there,
 Reduce, and curb me with Thy fear.
 Were I involv'd in shades of night ;
 That darkness would convert to light.
 What clouds can from discovery free ?
 What night, wherein Thou canst not see ?
 The night would shine like day's clear flame ;
 Darkness and light to Thee the same !

Yet one more extract from this beautiful Paraphrase.

PSALM cxlviii. p. 236.

You, who dwell above the skies,
 Free from human miseries ;
 You, whom highest heaven embowers,
 Praise the Lord with all your powers !
 Angels, your clear voices raise ;
 Him you heavenly armies praise ;
 Sun, and moon, with borrowed light,
 All you sparkling eyes of night ;
 Waters hanging in the air ;
 Heaven of heavens ; His praise declare !
 His deserved praise record ;
 His, who made you by His word ;
 Made you evermore to last,
 Set you bounds not to be past !

VI. The privilege which kings had thus granted, he who in many things affected kingship, the usurper Cromwell, is also found to have bestowed upon Metrical Psalmody. There had been a Version of the Psalms in metre, published without the name of the translator in 1644, which bore the following title. "The Book of Psalms, in Metre, close and proper to the Hebrew; ' smooth and pleasant for the metre; plain and easy for the Tunes: with Musical Notes, Arguments, Annotations, and Index." The translator was William Barton; and the translation, having received many alterations, again appeared, expressly *licensed by the Protector*, and no longer anonymous; but with the same title as before, bearing the name of WILLIAM BARTON, Master of Arts, as the translator; and the date of the year, in which the translation was republished, 1654. A

' I select from this first edition of W. Barton's Psalms, on account of the metre which the author calls *smooth* and is certainly *curious*, part of

PSALM xxi. p. 37.

O Lord, in thy salvation
 The King shall much delight,
 With joy and exultation
 In thy great strength and might.
 For what his heart desir'd to have,
 Thou granted'st every thing;
 And what his lips did of thee crave,
 Was not denied the king.

An edition of Barton's Psalms appeared as late as in 1705, with the notice "*as he left it finished in his life time.*"

specimen of this amended Version shall be given in part of

PSALM cxxxvii. p. 302.

When as we sat in Babylon,
 And by the river's side,
 Rememb'ring Sion's sad estate,
 Tears from our eyes did slide.
 As for our harps, and instruments
 Of music us'd before,
 We hung them on the willow trees
 That grew upon the shore.
 Where they, to whom we prisoners were,
 Did ask us eagerly,
 Come, let us hear your Hebrew songs
 And pleasant melody.
 Alas! said we, who can dispose
 His sorrowful heart to sing
 The praises of a loving God
 Under a foreign king?

Soon after the first edition of this Version was published, the Assembly of Divines recommended a Metrical Version or Paraphrase of the Psalms, made by Francis Rouse, the Presbyterian Provost of Eton College, called in contempt, by the loyalists of the time, “the old illiterate Jew of Eton.” And this translation, Anthony Wood says, though *ordered by the House of Commons to be printed in Nov. 1645*, had all, or most of it, he believes, been printed in 1641. It was to be used *instead of Sternhold's*, which, it was alleged, was grown obsolete. And to the General Assembly of the Church

² Wood, Ath. Ox. art. F. Rouse.

of Scotland it was also recommended; by the members of which it was ^a ordered to be examined, and reconsidered; and after that, the Commissioners of the revision were “to publish and emit the same for publick use.” For the optional use of Churches in England, this Version was revised by William Barton, and (whether Wood be correct or not as to the date of the first edition,) was republished in 1646. But neither the Assembly of Divines, nor the station of Rouse, nor the care of Barton, nor the licence of Cromwell, during any part of the reign of fanaticism, could wean the people from their attachment to the Old Version, or bid the press discontinue the publication of it. For from 1641, to the Restoration, the editions of the Psalms of Sternhold, &c. were not less than ten, within that period; which were published in London and Cambridge; besides which, there were other Metrical Versions of the Psalms, which then made their appearance without any authority for the usage of them, and are now rarely mentioned. Even the translations made by Milton, bearing the dates of 1648 and 1653, acquired no popularity;

^a See the Acts of the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, p. 353. viz. *Act for revising the Paraphrase of the Psalms brought from England, &c.* Aug. 28. 1647. Again, p. 428. The General Assembly appoints Rouse's Paraphrase of the Psalms, &c. to be sent to the Presbyteries, that they may carefully revise and examine the same, &c. Lastly, p. 479. Reference to the Commission for re-examining the Paraphrase, &c. See before, note i. p. 46. as to this Version by Rouse.

nor may they be said to be uniformly interesting, though occasionally they display stanzas of great merit.

VII. I come now to our *New Version*, as it still is called ; that is, the Version of the Psalms in metre, made by TATE and BRADY ; to which the *royal allowance*, or *permission*, for their being used in Churches, is usually prefixed ; and therefore needs not here be copied. This *allowance* is dated December 3, 1696. The two poets had, in the preceding year, published *An Essay of a New Version of the Psalms of David, consisting of the first twenty : fitted to the tunes used in Churches. London, Printed for the Company of Stationers, 1695.* These twenty Psalms, I may add, differ, in very many instances, from those which now form part of the received translation by these poets. Indeed, the first edition of their Version is frequently found to vary, in expressions, from succeeding ones. I will give a remarkable instance from this first edition, which bears the title of “ A New Version of the Psalms of David, fitted to the Tunes used in Churches : by N. Tate and N. Brady, London, 1696.” 12mo.

PSALM cxxxix. p. 296.

O could I so perfidious be
To think of once deserting Thee,
Where, Lord, could I thy influence shun,
Or whither from thy presence run ?
If up to heaven I take my flight,
'Tis there Thou dwell'st enthron'd in light ;
Or dive to hell's infernal plains,
'Tis there Almighty vengeance reigns !

If I the morning's wings could gain,
 And fly beyond the Western main,
 Thy ^b *nimbler* hand would first arrive,
 And there arrest Thy fugitive!
 Or should I ^c *sculk*, to shun Thy sight,
 Beneath the sable wings of night;
 One glance from Thee, one piercing ray,
 Would kindle darkness into day.
 The veil of night is no disguise,
 No ^d *umbrage to all-seeing* eyes:
 Through midnight shades Thou find'st thy way,
 As in the blazing noon of day.

Brady and Tate were not without immediate commendation. And among those who publicly commended their Version was a scholar of great note, himself also a translator of Psalms in metre, now forgotten, though ^e unjustly; which he published, viz. "An Essay towards a Paraphrase on the Psalms in English Verse, &c. By Basil Kennet,

^b *Swifter*. Later editions. ^c *Try*. The same.

^d *Screen from thy all-seeing*. The same.

^e From Kennet's Paraphrase, as it is little known, I will offer a specimen in part of Ps. xxxii. p. 22.

What heavenly peace, what joys refin'd,
 Dwell in a blest forgiven mind;
 Which, heal'd of every past offence,
 Shines with imputed innocence!
 No lurking guile, no secret vein,
 Is left that might renew the stain.
 For while my follies, unconfest,
 Found not a passage from my breast,
 My searching grief devour'd my prime,
 And sin had stol'n the wings of time.
 Thy pressures on my wasted spirits lay,
 By night a terror, and a cloud by day!

Fellow of C.C.C. Oxon. London, 1706." Svo. In the Preface to this Essay, he thus speaks of Tate and Brady: "The authors of the late Translation for the use of Churches, as they have fully answered their good design; so in many places they have not failed to shew themselves equal to a nobler attempt, and capable of all those graces of poetry, which are not vulgar." He then offers as a specimen the Psalm, which I have just copied, from their Version. Yet this Version also met with considerable opposition. Tate himself, in an *Essay for promoting Psalmody*, which he published in 1710, and dedicated to Queen Anne, thus admits it in the fourth chapter of the Essay, entitled *Of the Metre Part of Psalmody*. "By prejudiced judgments the least air of poetry in Psalm-metre, shall be censured as a crime. What is lively and graceful, shall be called light and airy: and barbarity and botching have the venerable appellation of grave and solid! After all, *to shew that I speak not for self-interest*, let the principal persons of our Church and State, who were pleased to approve and allow the use of *that Version wherein I was concerned*, be satisfied that a more serviceable performance is produced; and I shall think myself happy *in having helped to make way for such a Version*: let our Churches be accommodated to satisfaction, and my ambition is answered. And I am at this time more than ordinarily solicitous *for a favorable reception of such a Version, on the probability of our having such a Version*, the relict and last effort of no less a man

than our famous Sir John Denham^f; which if it comes up to the character of the author, it is likely that Psalmody may clap her wings, and *have no occasion to look out any farther*. I had not the opportunity of perusing the copy, which I hear is now in the press; but in respect of so great a name, I informed the worthy gentleman who had the manuscript, *as dear experience had taught me, the impediments and oppositions that such a work must meet withall; and the most proper methods of securing it a free passage into the world, and fair usage when it came abroad.*" He afterwards devotes a chapter to the subject of the difficulties, and prejudices, which all such endeavours must encounter; and he closes it with asking, "if such a

^f Dr. Johnson has said of Denham, thus: "consecrating his poetical powers to religion," that in this attempt of a Metrical Version of the Psalms he has failed. Yet there are passages in it of considerable merit; and the following may be cited as an example, taken from Ps. cii. p. 145. ed. 1714.

My heart like wither'd grass seems dead,
 My voice is lost in groans;
 My flesh consum'd for want of bread,
 And I can count my bones.
 So walks the pelican distrest,
 The bird of night so shrieks:
 So the sad sparrow from his nest
 His lost companion seeks.
 All day my foe renews his threat;
 Against my life he swears:
 Ashes, instead of bread, I eat,
 And mix my drink with tears.

directory of requisites, as he has hinted at, would not be of singular use in determining *the choice of a fit Metre-Version of Psalms to be fixed in Churches, if we have such a one ; or, if not, the most likely means of helping us to such a Version ;*" evidently alluding, in these marked expressions, to the disapprobation which had not been concealed in respect to the Version *made by himself and Brady*. And though that disapprobation in modern times is by many forgotten, or overlooked ; it was loudly pronounced by one of the greatest scholars of the age, the pious Bishop Beveridge^a ; was affirmed by ^b other eminent contemporary critics ; and in our own time has been admitted by a

^a He wrote " A Defence of the Book of Psalms collected into English metre, by T. Sternhold, J. Hopkins, and others ; with Critical Observations on the late New Version, compared with the Old." It was published in 1710.

^b See particularly Nelson's Life of Bishop Bull, p.74. The Version of Tate and Brady also was criticised in a " Specimen of some of David's Psalms in metre, with Remarks upon *the late Translators*, by Mr. John Phillips, in 1698." This was probably the celebrated poet of that name, although his biographers are silent as to such a work of his production. Philips was admitted a member of Christ-Church, Oxford, in 1694 ; and his reputation is admitted to have been confined to his friends, and to the University, till he extended it, about the year 1703, to a wider circle, by the *Splendid Shilling*. The Metrical Psalmody by John Phillips, or Philips, made its appearance, we see, between 1694 and 1703. Of this rare translation, I will give a specimen, in part of Ps. xiii. p. 22. And the stanzas are certainly most impressive :

ⁱ successor of Beveridge, in biblical learning his admired compeer. “^k As it is a great prejudice,” says Beveridge, “to the *New Translation*, [Tate and Brady’s,] that it is new; so it is a great advan-

How long wilt thou forget me, Lord,
 In this afflicted plight?
 How long wilt thou conceal from me
 Thy all-restoring light?
 How long shall I in deep suspense
 Consult my weary soul?
 How long shall my insulting foes
 Thus lawlessly controul?

Consider, Lord, and hear the cries,
 Which my loud sorrows make;
 And, lest I sleep the sleep of death,
 Keep thou mine eyes awake:
 Lest in their triumphs thus they sing,
 We have prevail’d at length!
 Lest their proud trophies they advance,
 That have pull’d down my strength!

There was another critic, about this time, who, in animadverting upon preceding Versions, endeavoured, but in vain, to recommend his own performance to notice; and published “The first fifteen Psalms of David translated into Lyric verse, proposed as an Essay, supplying the perspicuity and coherence according to the modern art of poetry; not known to have been attempted before in any language. With a preface containing some observations of *the great and general defectiveness of former Versions in Greek, Latin, and English*, 1701.” This translator was Dr. James Gibbs. His attempt met with no encouragement: his poetry is of mean character.

ⁱ Horsley, Bishop of St. Asaph, as Beveridge had been. See the next chapter, Sect. II.

^k Defence of Sternhold’s Translation, &c. p. 15.

tage to *the old*, that it is old ; *as old as the Reformation itself* ; when the Church (I speak not of the State,) was inflamed with more than ordinary zeal for the honour of God, and was accordingly influenced and actuated with an extraordinary measure of his Holy Spirit, as it was necessary she should be, for the carrying on and finishing so great a work in that critical juncture. Insomuch, that I have heard it observed by divines, as well as other considering persons, that what was done at that time is scarce imitable in this." He afterwards thus indignantly denounces the *New Version* : " ¹ It is a *New Version indeed* ; a great part of it running in a style that is *wholly new*, according to the *new* modes of writing, invented and practised only in this age ! There are many such *new* phrases, and romantic expressions, in this Version, which are taken up by our present poets, and being now in fashion, may serve well enough in other places ; but can by no means suit with a Divine poem, much less with one inspired by God himself."

VIII. Of the Version, subsequent to that of Tate and Brady, made by Sir RICHARD BLACKMORE, Johnson has furnished an account, in his Life of that poet ; and he considers it inferior to its privileged predecessor. "*The lovers of musical devotion*," he says, "*have always wished for a more happy Metrical Version than they have yet obtained of the Book of Psalms* : this wish the piety of Blackmore led him to gratify ; and he produced, in 1721,

¹ Defence of Sternhold's Translation, &c. p. 15.

A New Version of the Psalms of David, fitted to the Tunes used in Churches ; which, being recommended by the Archbishops and many Bishops, obtained a licence for its admission into public worship : but no admission has it yet obtained, nor has it any right to come where Brady and Tate have got possession. Blackmore's name must be added to those of many others, who, by the same attempt, have obtained only the praise of meaning well." The Version of Blackmore is certainly slumbering in repose, which will never, perhaps, be disturbed. Yet the censure of Johnson is too general. There have been translators of Psalms into English metre, of whose strains he would have said, that they were not only well intended, but well delivered, if he had referred to the pages of ^m Sandys. Would he have denied to such pious Psalmody also, as I have cited in the note below, the praise of ⁿ im-

^m See Sect. V. of the present chapter.

ⁿ I will first cite a part of the 104th Psalm, translated by Sir Henry Wotton.

My soul, exalt the Lord with hymns of praise :

O Lord, my God, how boundless is thy might !

Whose throne of state is cloth'd with glorious rays,

And round about hast rob'd thyself with light.

Who like a curtain hast the heavens display'd,

And in the watry roofs thy chambers laid.

Whose chariots are the thicken'd clouds above,

Who walk'st upon the winged winds below ;

At whose command the airy spirits move,

And fiery meteors their obedience show.

Who on this base the earth didst firmly found,

And mad'st the deep to circumvest it round.

pressive poetry ? Or would he have impugned what has lately been said even of the Old Version of the

The waves that rise would drown the highest hill,
 But at Thy check they fly, and when they hear
 Thy thundering voice, they post to do Thy will,
 And bound their furies in their proper sphere :
 Where surging floods and valing ebbs can tell,
 That none beyond Thy marks must sink or swell.

Next from PSALM cxxxvii. printed in a small collection of Psalms in 1655 ; by whom translated, I am unable to say.

Sitting by the streams that glide
 Down by Babel's towering wall,
 With our tears we fill'd the tide ;
 Whilst our mindful thoughts recall
 Thee, O Sion, and thy fall !

Our neglected harps unstrung,
 Not acquainted with the hand
 Of the skilful tuner, hung
 On the willow trees that stand
 Planted in the neighbour land.

Yet the spiteful foe commands
 Songs of mirth, and bids us lay
 To dumb harps our captive hands,
 And (to scoff our sorrows,) say
 Sing us some sweet Hebrew lay !

From the same Psalm, in a Version published in 1664, and entitled, " The Psalms of King David, paraphrased, and turned into English verse, according to the common metre, &c."

As on Euphrates' shady banks,
 Near Babylon's proud walls,
 We sat us down, and wept to think
 On Sion's funerals.

Psalms, that in some of those metrical compositions there is occasionally found a “° liquid sweetness, and generally a force and grandeur, the effect of which is much encreased by its simplicity?” There will be occasion, in the next chapter, to give extracts from this Version of Sternhold, &c. in proof of such distinction.

Our solemn harps, to which so late
We sacred hymns had sung,
Now on the willows (like ourselves,
Mute, and untuned,) hung.
They, that had made us captive slaves,
Untimely songs desir'd ;
And our proud spoilers mirth, in scorn
Of our sad woes, requir'd.

From PSALM cxxxix. in the same Paraphrase.

Where shall I my concealed head
Hide from Thy searching sight ?
Or whither from Thy presence take
My undiscover'd flight ?
If I climb heaven, there Thou dost
In beams of light appear ;
If in the shades of hell I make
My pallet, Thou art there.
If mounted on the airy wings
Of the grey-feather'd morn,
I should unto the farthest shores
Of Western seas be borne ;
Ev'n there Thy overtaking hand
Would lead me back again ;
And Thy right hand the vain escapes
Of my stol'n flight restrain.

° Kennedy's Thoughts on Psalmody, &c. p. 65.

CHAPTER IV.

I. OF THE CHARACTER OF THE OLD VERSION IN REGARD TO THE FIDELITY OF IT, WITH SOME CONSIDERATIONS AS TO THE POETRY OF IT, BY BISHOP BEVERIDGE.—II. BY BISHOP HORSLEY.—III. BY OTHER WRITERS: WITH EXTRACTS ALSO FROM THE VERSION.—IV. CONCLUSION.

I. In framing the Old Metrical Version of the Psalms, great care was taken of adhering to the Hebrew text. To this most valuable part in the character of it, Bishop BEVERIDGE and Bishop HORSLEY, as I have already observed, have given especial testimony. And whose testimony can be more worthy of belief? The first of these learned Prelates has thus illustrated the fact. “^a That, which is chiefly to be observed in the title, is, that this whole Book of Psalms collected into English metre, by T. Sternhold, J. Hopkins, and others, *was conferred with the Hebrew*. Though they who did it were, doubtless, good men, and as good

^a Defence of Sternhold's Version, &c. p. 32, et seq.

poets as the age afforded, and at least ^b one of them in great favour at Court; yet it was not set forth and allowed to be used in all Churches, till other learned men had conferred or compared it with the Hebrew. So great care was then taken, that nothing might be used publicly in the Church, as the Word of God, but what was really so. And how faithfully they, to whom this great work was referred, discharged the trust reposed in them, appears sufficiently from the work itself. *For several well skilled in the Hebrew tongue, in our age, have observed THIS TRANSLATION to agree so exactly with the Hebrew text, that they could not but wonder how T. Sternhold, J. Hopkins, and such others, could make it; not considering, that we have it, not as it was first made by them, but as it was afterwards adjusted by other learned men to the Original.* And if any one will take the pains to compare this translation of the Psalms with that in the Bible, made out of the Hebrew in King James the first's reign, he will find that it generally gives the same

^b Puttenham, in his *Arte of English Poesie*, p. 12. says, that King Henry VIII. made Sternhold *for a few Psalms of David, turned into English metre by him*, Groom of his Privy Chamber, and gave him many other good gifts. See the Dissertation prefixed to Ritson's *Ancient Songs*, 1790. p. 58. Sternhold retained his office under Edward VI. by whom he was much favoured, and to whom he dedicated the Psalms which were published in 1549, or before that year. He died in 1549.

sense of the text as that doth; in such places also where that differs from the Old Translation in our Common Prayer Books; except where this latter seems to give the sense more clearly than the other. In some places, I confess, it differs from both; but they are such, where the text is so obscure, that interpreters do not agree about the meaning of it. In which case it is very observable, that this Old Translation follows the Septuagint, the most ancient and most authentic translation that is extant. *Which shews not only the great learning, but likewise the extraordinary care, and diligence, that was used in the reviewing of it; that we might have the sense of the Hebrew Text, where it was doubtful, according to the most approved interpreters of it.* But in plain uncontroverted places, this Old Translation in verse generally agrees so exactly with the New in prose, though made above sixty years before it, that if the latter was not in some places taken out of the Old, the Old must needs be drawn from the same fountain with it, or at least reduced to it. And so it plainly was; not in a cursory and superficial manner, but with so much art, and discretion, that it often renders the sense clearer than the other doth. And where a place is equally capable of a double sense, so that some translations give it one sense, some another; this strives to take in both, that we may be sure to have the right; as I have sometimes found, *in comparing this Translation with the text.* For which I must thank the *New Version*, in that it gave me the occasion of looking

thus narrowly into *the Old*. For though I had always a good opinion of it, I could never else have thought we had had such a jewel among us ; which if it was but as rare as it is common, all the learned that study the Scripture would strive to get it at any rate. But can we say as much of the New Version, which is now brought into competition with it ? I heartily wish we could. But I do not hear that this was ever conferred with the Hebrew, as the other was ; nor so much as that any of our bishops, or other learned in that language, were appointed or authorized to do it. And there is too much cause to suspect, that it was never done. For if we may take our measures of its agreeing, or disagreeing, with the Hebrew text, from its agreeing, or not agreeing, with the Psalms in the New Translation of the Bible made out of the Hebrew ; we may thence conclude, that there was not that care taken about this, as there was about the Old Version. Notwithstanding this great advantage which the Old Translation hath above the New, *in that it comes and keeps nearer to the text* ; there are other things, wherein the New may seem as much preferable to the Old. As particularly, in that the style of the Old is plain, and low, and heavy : the other is brisk and lively, and flourished here and there with wit and fancy. But for this we may first consider, who they are that make this objection against the Old Translation : Not they for whom it was chiefly

intended, the ^c common people, that are the far greatest part of the kingdom. You never hear them, or any of them, complain, that the Psalms which they sing in their Churches are too plain, too low, or too heavy for them. But they rather love and admire them the more for it, and are more edified by the use of them. The plainer they are, the sooner they understand them : the lower their style is, the better it is levelled to their capacities ; and the heavier they go, the more easily they can keep pace with them. And, therefore, they are so far from looking upon this as a fault in their Psalms, that they prize them the more for it. Another cavil, which some make against this old Translation, is, that the ^d rhyme is not always good. They can-

^c This position has been often admitted both by those who have offered new Versions of the Psalms, and by those who have only contended for such alterations. See also Nelson's *Life of Bishop Bull*, p. 74.

^d Donne was one of the earliest of those, who attacked the rhymes of Sternhold and his associates ; and, by way of illustrating his superiority over the despised Version in framing loftier or sweeter numbers, he turned into metre the 137th Psalm, which the sample of a stanza or two at once exhibits as destitute of intelligible and sober versification.

By Euphrates' flowery side
 We did bide ;
 From dear Juda far absented,
 Tearing the air with our cries ;
 And our eyes
 With their streams his stream augmented :

not deny that, for the most part, it is better than could be well expected from the age it was made in, and as good as can be desired now. But they say, it is sometimes faulty. And so it is in most books of English poetry, of the same bulk, that I have seen. But what then? The Psalms were collected into metre, that they might be better sung to God. And while devout people are singing forth the praises of God, do they * mind the rhyme? or

When poor Sion's doleful state,
Desolate,
Sacked, burned, and inthrall'd,
And the temple spoil'd, which we
Ne'er should see,
'To our mirthless minds we called.—

Lord, curse Edom's traiterous kind;
Bear in mind;
In our ruins how they revell'd:
Sack, kill, burn, they cry'd out still,
Sack, burn, kill;
Down with all, let all be levelled!

Who will prefer such strains as these to the plain rhymes of Whityngham, by whom the same Psalm, in our Old Version, was translated, though indeed it is by no means like the simplicity and feeling which other parts of the Version exhibit? Fuller, the historian, next excepted against the rhymes of Sternhold, &c. and proposed an amendment of them; allowing that “the fabrick of these Psalms should stand *unremoved for the main*, yet that some bad contrivance therein may be mended, and the *bald rhymes* in some places get a new nap, which would not much discompose the memory of the people.” But see the next note.

* It has thus been finely observed by Archbishop Secker,

whether the words sound alike at the end of every other verse or line? This is not their business at that time. Neither need they ever concern themselves about it. If it was not the mode of our English poetry, and some help to the memory, it would

that “ the language of our forefathers, even where it may seem very uncouth at present, had in its time frequently full as much beauty, and propriety, as ours. And several words of it have been, for that reason, revived by some of our best modern authors. But at least the matter comprised in the words of which I am speaking, (the Old Metrical Version of the Psalms,) is so highly respectable, *that the mind which is affected only by the phrase, and not by the sense, must be a light one indeed.*” See Bishop Mant’s edition of the Common Prayer Book, p. 88. There is a different, but, we trust, not a general feeling, as to this point. For there is a recent publication, of which the professed object is, “ to adapt popular Psalms and Hymns to a more elegant and *fascinating* style of music than has hitherto been attempted ;” in order to which, the editor says, “ in some instances it has been found necessary *to alter the metre, and the arrangement of the words, to compose lines, verses, or hymns, as circumstances appeared to require, and to adapt the phraseology to the peculiar style and emphasis of the music !*” Who sees not, then, the justness as well as the force of the reflection upon such vitiated taste, made by the author of *Religio Clerici*, ed. 1821, p. 72.

The Psalm begins—not that pure strain of praise
In olden times our fathers lov’d to raise :
A richer Version glads the modern saint ;
Tate has no softness, Sternhold is too quaint.
So the rhyme smoothly flows, they little care
How small a part of David’s sense is there !—
Then for the music ;—rising by degrees,
First a light prelude runs along the keys ;

be no matter whether there was ^f any rhyming at all in the Psalms, so long as the metre, or number of syllables in each verse, is proportioned to the tune set to it. But the main objection against this Old Translation is, that there are many ^g old words in it, which are now grown obsolete. There may,

Next in soft cadence to the bosom steal
 Quavers that glow, and shakes and trills that feel ;
 Airs with voluptuous change that melt and rise,
 Till the last languid fall dissolves and dies.
 Oh! 'tis a sickly appetite that needs
 Such spic'd and season'd diet when it feeds.
 Content with plainer meats, Devotion wants
 Nor cloying syrups, nor hot stimulants.

^f Beveridge did not live to see a publication of this kind : but such there certainly have been ; the first, perhaps, bearing the title of "*Psalterium Americanum* : The Book of Psalms, in a translation exactly conformed unto the original ; but all *in blank verse* ; fitted unto the tunes commonly used in our Churches, with illustrations, &c. ; 12mo. Boston, in New England. 1718." It is printed, as in the following extract from Ps. cxliii. p. 390.

" Eternal God, hear Thou my prayer ;
 Harken to my requests :
 Answer me in thy faithfulness,
 And in Thy righteousness."

Again, Ps. cxlviii. p. 404.

" Let Hallelujah now be sung !
 Now from the heavens above :
 Praise the Eternal God ; praise Him
 In the high places there."

^g See the observation of Archbishop Secker in the last note but one.

perhaps, be some, but not many, if any at all among the vulgar, for whose use it was chiefly designed. They still use those words, or at least understand them as well as any that are in common use among them. It is, we know, among the common people that the language of every nation is best preserved. The learned, who understand other tongues, and such as converse with foreigners, are apt to take in the words of other languages, and mix them with their own; and so, by degrees, lay aside some of their own, for such as they have borrowed from other countries. But it is not so with the plain country people. They know no other but their own mother tongue; and, using that only upon all occasions, they still keep up the words and phrases that are proper to it, as they received them from their forefathers; and shall tell you the meaning of them better than they who are more learned. Therefore, as to such people, this objection has no weight at all in it; nor, indeed, as to any other. For who is it, that knows not the meaning of all the words in this Old Translation of the Psalms? or at least may not understand them, if he will, as well as any new words, when he first hears them? What exception, then, can be taken against those old words? Are they not all true English words? And is it any fault, that they are not Latin or French? It must come to that at last; for you can scarce find any better English. What necessity, then, can there be of changing them? Must the translation of the Holy Scripture be altered, as often as any affect

new words and modes of speaking? or, as some alter their clothes, only to be in the fashion? They, who are thus given to change, will never want occasion for it. For suppose we should lay aside the old words, and put new in their place, the new in time would grow old too: and then *new* ones must be invented to supply *their* room. And so there will be no end of changing: *But every age must have a New Translation of the Psalms, and of the whole Bible too!* Whereas, all such public writings as are of general use, especially in religion, ought to be preserved entire, as old Acts of Parliament and law-books are; just as they were at first written: that people may know what to stick to, and not be tempted to think their religion as changeable as their language. Wherefore I do not see wherein the Old Version of the Psalms in metre is one jot the better for the ^b alterations that have been made in it, nor what necessity there was of making any at all; much less, how a thing of such public use can ever be altered *without public authority*; or by that so as to be made much better than it is, or at least than it was when first set forth and published."

II. We proceed next to the criticism of Bishop HORSLEY. "ⁱ The Book of Psalms is a complete sys-

^b This indeed has been a frequent subject of complaint. In the extracts, which I presently make from the old edition, the injudicious variations of the modern ones will abundantly be shewn.

ⁱ See Bishop Horsley's Commentary on the Psalms.

tem of divinity for the use and edification of the common people of the Christian Church. In deriving this edification from it, which it is calculated to convey, they may receive much assistance *from a work which the ignorance of^k modern refinement would take out of their hands.* I speak of the OLD SINGING PSALMS, *the Metrical Version of Sternhold and Hopkins.* This is not what I believe it is now generally supposed to be, nothing better than an awkward versification of a former English translation. *It was an original translation of the Hebrew text, earlier by many years than the prose translation in the Bible ; and of all that are in any degree paraphrastic, as all verse in some degree must be, it is the best and most exact we have to put into the hands of the common people.* The authors of this Version considered the verse merely as a contrivance to^l assist the memory. They were

^k This reflection will hardly be relished by the numerous refiners of Metrical Psalmody in modern times. Even a century and a half ago, Fuller, the Church Historian, however, countenanced this kind of animadversion. “ Many since [the first publication of the Psalms of Sternhold, &c.] *have far refined these Translations ; but yet their labours therein* [were] *never generally received in the Church ;* principally, because unbook-learned people have conned by heart many Psalms of the Old Translation, which would be wholly disinherited of their patrimony, if a new edition were set forth,” &c. Then follows the desire, which he expresses, as to the rhymes in the fourth note of the present chapter.

^l See what Mason has remarked in the first chapter of the present work, and the preceding note. Fuller also expressly and in his quaint manner, says, that “ these Psalms were there-

nified by its simplicity, is inadequate, and in the poverty of its style, contemptible. The innovation, when it was first attempted, was ⁿ opposed, though in the end unsuccessfully, by the soundest divines, the most accomplished scholars, and the men of the truest taste at that time in the seat of authority in the Church of England.”

III. Content as the reader will be with the testimonies of such divines and scholars, as BEVERIDGE and HORSLEY, in regard to the fidelity of the Old Metrical Version of the Psalms; I will not leave him without directing him also to passages in this Translation, which rescue it from the general obloquy cast upon its poetical character. It has been well observed, that “^o of late years it has been much the fashion among us to look down upon the Version of Sternhold and Hopkins with disdain and ridicule. And WARTON has contributed no little to the confirming of this opinion, by condemning, in a few sweeping sentences, *the whole composition as mean and contemptible*; as likely to excite laughter, rather than to assist and inspire devotion; as retained in the service of our Church *to the disgrace of Sacred Music, Sacred Poetry, and our Established Worship*. But surely these are not the sentiments of a man, who has deliberately and impartially examined into all the circumstances of the case; who has considered the peculiar nature of the

ⁿ See the preceding Chapter; Sect. VII.

^o By Dr. H. Cotton, of Christ Church, Oxford, in the *Christian Remembrancer*, June, 1821, p. 329.

subject-matter, the object of their work, and the habits and attainments of the great bulk of those for whose use and benefit it was principally intended. Where is the fairness, or the wisdom, of condemning the poetry of the age of Edward VI. because it wants the polish and embellishments of that of George III.? The real fact is, that Warton, by his own confession, considered any metrical psalms whatever as incompatible with the spirit of the English Liturgy: ‘*I reprobate any version at all, more especially if intended for the use of the Church.*’ With these feelings and ideas, it can hardly be supposed, that he would enter without bias into the discussion of the merits of any one particular version: and as that of Sternhold and Hopkins appeared to be the most prominent, as being better known and more extensively used than the rest, *he has studiously sought out, and exposed, what he considers the chief defects in this.* And from them he has maintained the propriety, and necessity, of banishing Metrical Psalms altogether from our service. Yet notwithstanding the classic taste and critical celebrity of Warton, many persons may think with me, that his arguments on this point are not sufficiently conclusive; that we may not only continue to use the Psalms in metre, with perfect safety to our present Church Establishment, and without danger of being called either Puritans or Calvinists; but, further, that we may without moral turpitude, or actual mischief, go on to use them in that form

which Sternhold and Hopkins have prepared. That this generally-abused Version ever actually *did* impede devotion, it has not been even attempted to be shewn. But that it has often produced the most salutary effects, it would not perhaps be difficult to shew. If it has its defects, it has likewise, or has had, its advantages; *and even in the present age of cultivation and refinement, there are not wanting those, who, in the midst of versions, possessing higher claims to poetical excellence, can yet look up to the pious and simple labours of these men with unfeigned sentiments of gratitude and respect.*" Another writer has accordingly remarked, that the Version of King James, allowed and recommended by his son, *as exactly and truly done*, to be sung in Churches, is indeed plain and literal, "^p *but not to be compared to the older and much abused Version of Sternhold and Hopkins.* 'There is in Sternhold a quaintness of expression, a faithfulness and simplicity, that is well becoming the inspired Original, and adapted to the comprehension of the lower orders, for whose use a metrical translation is principally required. There is a harmony in their lines, if we read the words in the cadence of those times, which would do no discredit to the poets of the present day. Alliterations are frequent, though often lost, with many other beauties, and

^p Letter signed C. in the Christian Remembrancer, August, 1821, p. 468. See also what is said of this Royal Version, Chap. III. Sect. IV.

much mangled in our modern editions ; and, what I must consider a very grand desideratum, there is prefixed to every psalm a brief ^asummary of its contents; and, where it is at all of a prophetic character, an application of it to our Lord or his Church; and this, as in the case of the second, is often introduced into the body of the psalm; so that we have ^r David in a Christian dress; or, what is the highest perfection that we can hope to attain in the way of hymns, an inspired writer speaking as a Christian." The extracts, which I will now make from this Version, are first from Ps. xviii. and I request the reader to take notice, that these extracts are not made from modern editions, in which single words often, and sometimes whole lines, supply the place of the true readings; but from the old unsophisticated publication.

The Lord descended from above,
And bow'd the heavens high;
And underneath His feet He cast
The darkness of the sky.

^a See what is said in the preceding note ^m of the present Chapter.

^r Such was Archbishop Parker's observation, as the writer of the above remark will be pleased to know. "*David—was a Christian divine in spirit, a perfect poet in his metre, and an expert musician in ordering his instruments, and setting his tunes agreeably.*" The whole Psalter, &c. Imprinted by John Day, last leaf preceding the musical part of the Archbishop's Translation.

On Cherubs, and on Cherubins,
 Full royally He rode;
 And on the wings of * all the winds
 Came flying all abroad.
 And like a den most dark he made
 His hid and secret place:
 With waters black, and airy clouds,
 † Environed He was.
 † But when the presence of His face
 In brightness shall appear,
 The clouds consume; and in their stead
 Come hail and coals of fire.

Next from Ps. xxiii.

My shepherd is the living Lord,
 Nothing ‡ therefore I need:
 In pastures fair † with waters calm,
 He ‡ sets me for to feed.

* Variations in modern editions are as follow in this and the other Psalms cited.

—— “The wings of *mighty* winds.”

† “*Encompassed* he was.”

‡ Here the modern editions have altered the whole stanza:

“At his bright presence did thick clouds
 In haste away retire,
 And in the stead thereof did come
 Hailstones and coals of fire:”

What a puny substitution for the strength of the stanza above!

‡ “*I therefore nothing* need.” This was altered in disdain of the usual accent on the second syllable of *therefore* by our old poets; by Spenser, by Shakspeare, &c.

† “In pastures fair *near pleasant streams*.” This is a very unwarrantable alteration: the original Version reads, *with waters calm*, as our authorized Translation of the Bible afterwards rendered the passage: “He maketh me lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside *the still waters*.”

‡ “*Setteth*.” It is also *the present tense* in the Bible Version throughout this extract.

He ^a did convert and glad my soul,
 And ^b brought my mind in frame
 To walk in paths of righteousness,
 For His most holy Name.
 Yea though I walk in vale of death,
 Yet will I fear no ill;
 Thy rod, ^c Thy staff, ^d doth comfort me,
 And Thou art with me still.

From Ps. ciii.

The Lord that made us know'th our shape,
 Our mold and fashion just;
 How weak and frail our nature is,
 And ^e how we be but dust.
 And how the time of mortal men
 Is like the withering hay;
 Or like the flower right fair in field,
 That fades full soon away!

From Ps. civ.

His chamber beams lie in the clouds full sure,
 Which as ^f a chariot are made Him to bear:
 And there with much swiftness His course doth endure,
 Upon the wings riding of winds in the air.
 He maketh His spirits as heralds to go,
 And lightnings to serve we see also prest:
 His will to accomplish they run to and fro,
 To save or consume things as seemeth Him best.

^a "Shall."

^b "Bring."

^c "And staff."

^d "Shall."

^e "And that we are, &c."

^f "His chariots."

Lastly, from Ps. cvii.

And like a drunkard to and fro,
 Now here, now there, they reel;
 As men, ^s with fear, of sense bereft,
 Or had of sense no feel.
 Then did they cry, in their distress,
 Unto the Lord for aid;
 Who did remove their troublous state,
 According as they pray'd.
 For at His word the Lord doth make
 The sturdy storm to cease;
 So that the ^h great waves from their rage
 Are brought to rest and peace.

IV. Having thus carefully examined the Old Version of the Psalms, and the most material circumstances respecting the history and authority of it; I may add the Bishop of Peterborough's observation as to the proposal of any new collection of Psalms in metre, which may be thought worthy to supersede the old. " ⁱ Whether it would be advisable, under the present circumstances, to make a new collection of Psalms and Hymns, which may accord with sound doctrine and genuine devotion, while they are better adapted to modern taste than productions of an earlier date; *to submit that selection to the judgment of the Bishops; and then to petition the King*

^s "As men *who had their reason lost,*
And had no sense to feel."

^h "So that *the waves from their great rage are brought,*" &c.
 How much more poetical is the old line,

So that *the great waves* from their rage, &c.

ⁱ Appendix to the Bishop of Peterborough's Charge.

in Council, that he would be pleased to allow the same to be sung in Churches ; is a question which may become a fit subject for examination." Such a submission to the decision of the Governors, and such an allowance by the Head, of the United Church of England and Ireland, would certainly remove divisions among the Clergy as to Psalms in metre, of which indeed Bishop Beveridge also complained ; and would silence his exclamation, which also yet indeed is heard, ^k *What is become of our uniformity ?* But perhaps enough has been said to shew, that uniformity in this respect has been broken without reason, and may yet be maintained without innovation ; and that though we hear of intended Metrical Versions, both of the Psalms and other parts of Scripture, by some of our present celebrated poets ; of "^l solemn songs," which may possibly be formed to " hold us,

—— "^m with their melodious harmony,
" In willing chains and sweet captivity ;"

still it cannot be denied, that "ⁿ it concerns all the members, as well as the Clergy, of the Church of England, to stand up for her reputation in using the Old Version so many years together, as she has done ; when, if there had been any such need or

^k Defence of the Old Version, p. 100.

^l Milton, at a Vacation Exercise in the College, &c. ver. 49.

^m Ibid. ver. 51.

ⁿ Bishop Beveridge's Defence of the Old Version, p. 119.

occasion for it, she had, all along, learned men enough to have made another, much better than the New; I do not say, than the Old; neither did she think so. *If she had*, SHE WOULD MOST CERTAINLY HAVE PROCURED SUCH A ONE TO BE MADE AND ALLOWED BEFORE NOW."

THE END.

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